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T. E. H.

ATHENÆUM,
December 17, 1840.

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PETER PRIGGINS.

CHAPTER I.

I AM not vain enough in my old age to fancy that any body, except my own family, out of St. Peter's College, Oxford, cares one farthing about the sort of life that I, Peter Priggins, have led for nearly seventy years ; though some people, either from curiosity, or because they have nothing better to do, are always poking their noses into other people's concerns, instead of reserving them for their legitimate uses—snuff and pocket-handkerchiefs ; for I do not reckon the pulling of a man's nose out of his face, for having insulted you, putting that nose of his to a *legitimate* use. A nose, in my opinion, was never

intended to be manipulated, except through the medium of a **Bandana**.

Some impertinent people might, therefore, be inclined to ask why I, Peter Priggins, forced myself upon the stage of life for public inspection ; like a patent grogometer, or any other new article of luxury ; and, however irrelevant the query may seem to decent members of society, I think—at least I feel that I ought to think—it not unbecoming of me to answer it.

My reasons then for publishing my “life and times” are these : In the first place, for my own amusement and to gratify—I don’t conceal it—that vanity to which, as an Oxford man, I have a right to lay claim. After spending all my *best* days—that is, the days when I was *worst* off—in the service of my college, its members have justly secured my *otium cum dignitate*, by the weekly donation—exhibition would be more collegiate—of one pound one ; this, together with the savings from my many years’ peculium, and those little scrapings unknown to all but the fraternity of scouts or gyps, as the Cambridge men call them, enable me to have daily my “pint

of wine and a candle ;” and as I crack my nuts and my jokes alternately—a trick I learned from one of our Bursars—to think of “ the days when I was young,” and speculate on the destiny of many “ a light of other days,” and wonder, and, as I am told, sometimes grumble at the mighty changes I have witnessed in “ my times ” in Oxford.

But my principal motive — and a most disinterested one it must be allowed to be — is, by publishing some events that have occurred in my times, to remove as much as possible of that ignorance which is observable every where *out* of Oxford, by allowing all those who can prove an alibi to have an insight into what goes on *in* Oxford ; and, *but that’s no one else’s business but my own*, to apply the proceeds, if any, to “increase my little store and keep my sons” and daughters at home.

I could mention another reason for my boldness in going to press (I believe that’s the crack term), and I think that reason a strong one. It is possible—possible I say, and grieved I am to say it—that Oxford may be annihilated, though

we, of course, shall resist to the last ; or, which is almost as bad, so thoroughly amalgamated by the in-pourings of our “dissenting brethren,” which, I believe, is the correct designation of those psalm-singing individuals, that, like an “old friend with a new face,” as I call my grandfather’s watch with its new dial-plate, its former comely features may be entirely obliterated by this unsightly new epidermis of dissent. I give, therefore, the manuscript of my records of the “good old days,” to be deposited in the ark of the university amongst other valuables ; and lest, in troublous times, the hands of rude men should pollute and plunder that sacred chest — though they’ll be puzzled to find it, because it “shape hath none,”—I would foil their base attempts to destroy my “lays of the olden time,” by enabling the scattered myriads of Oxonians to keep each a copy in his own patent, fire-proof, unpickable-by-any-key-but-the-right iron chest ; and my publisher justly observes, that no man ought to be without one copy at least.

Before I proceed any further, it may be necessary to explain to the reader who is amazed at

my erudition that, though a scout and bedmaker, I am not an uneducated man ; I am not at all inclined to doubt that the superiority of my language has astonished him, if he is not an Oxford man ; but that, as I said before, is easily explained away *in* Oxford. How I acquired so much learning will appear hereafter.

“*Quid Domini faciant audent cum talia Fures.*”

If scouts can write thus, what cannot their masters do? That's what we Oxford men call an induction. My father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, not omitting some of the collaterals, masculine and feminine, maternal and paternal, have all devoted their energies to promoting the comforts of the graduates and undergraduates of St. Peter's College for a century past or more ; for, like the Medes of old, with us the son of a cook is brought up as a cook, and the son of a scout or bedmaker looks to succeed his father in the same profession. This rule does not apply to the offices of college butler or porter ; they are always filled by the favourite butler and coachman of the head of the college, at the time the vacancy occurs. The height of our ambition

—I speak of the Priggins family—was the place of common-room man, and my father's portrait now decorates *our* common-room in consideration of fifty years' servitude in that capacity.

I was his deputy from the time his "hand forgot its cunning," after the twelfth bottle — for port wine was drunk in those days, and so were some of its drinkers ;—but that's parenthetic—and tea was scarce then, if not unknown. As tea has cheapened, humbug has progressed.

My mother was fortunately a very pretty woman, and my father fell so suddenly and desperately in love with her one day on visiting the village where she dwelt, which was the favourite summer's residence of one of his masters, that he married her in less than a week, and was blessed with my appearance in rather less than seven months. The young squire did not forget his *protégée*, who had been lady's-maid at the Hall, and promised to provide for her first-born, if it proved a boy. Well! I *was* a boy, and reckoned more like the squire than my own mother's husband; and he, the squire, kept his word, for he sent mother half a bacon-hog, as a

delicacy during her recovery ; and me, a basket of cherries and plums, which being administered injudiciously, stones and all, had very nearly *provided* for me for ever.

I don't know how it was, but father never took to me so kindly as he did to the rest of his children ; he hated my black hair and eyes, because his own were *vice versâ*, which he construed “a horse of another colour ;” and, in consequence, my mess was generally the reverse of Benjamin's, though my coat resembled Joseph's, being of many colours from numerous patchings.

Through the interest of our principal, I got an appointment as a chorister, and having a clear voice, and a good, though very eccentric singing-master, I soon became a pet with the men, both graduates and undergraduates ; and many a good blow-out, as the Eton men say, have I got for singing a song or two—but more of this by and by. All went smoothly with me for a few years, and I got a tolerable smattering of Greek and Latin, considering the time I was obliged to devote to music and singing ; but at last my voice was broken, and then my head, and

at last my spirits, for I could not sing a note, and I was cast aside like a cracked flute by my former patrons. So I threw off my gown — set up my cap for a cockshy, and told the governor flatly and plainly I would be a scout and nothing else. He grumbled at first, but upon considering that as a parson, for he meant me to take orders, I might be lucky enough to get a chaplaincy of sixty or seventy pounds a year, and be obliged to buy my own clothes; whereas, as a bedmaker, at which dignity I had an excellent prospect of arriving, I should make my hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and be well clothed and fed, besides being enabled to put by a few little *et ceteras*.

I entered on my duties under my governor, and, since then, have never regretted my choice. I have been scout's boy — the dirtiest specimens of puerility to be found are those boys — scout, bedmaker, and common-room man, and in all these offices I have seen and heard a few things, which would *rayther* astonish the world if they were divulged; but my grand principle through life has been “NEVER SPLIT.” I mean,

as sayings and doings occur to me, to note those which may be published without hurting the feelings of any individual—without any order or arrangement. Like the Irish beggar, I sha'n't “wait to pick them, but take them as they come”

I recollect one evening, as I was putting the third bottle of port on the common-room table, when the small party seated there seemed determined to be cozy, and have one bottle more and a rubber, their arrangements were suddenly and unexpectedly interrupted by the entrance of an individual, so thoroughly enveloped in great coats and handkerchiefs, that, until he unrolled himself like a mummy, we failed to recognize our Bursar. He had just returned from a journey, apparently tedious and disagreeable, and as it had been raining in earnest and those stinking Mackintoshes were not then invented, he was pretty well soaked through.

After he had changed his dripping garments, and stowed away a basin of warm soup and a glass or two of sherry, he joined the common-room party and made play at the port.

His remarks on the weather, the state of the roads, and his evident lowness of spirits, led the others to make inquiries as to the cause of his journey and his sudden return ; and as his answer involved the fate of an old brother collegian, all idea of whist was given up for

THE BURSAR'S TALE.

“ Peter,” said he to me, “ remove the decanters and bring in the largest bowl filled with good egg-flip, for ere I get to the end of my tale, my hearers will require something consolatory, and so shall I.”

After tasting and signifying his approbation of my brewing, by a peculiar twinkle of the eye, which to me was masonic, he put his feet on the fender, and thus began :

Go where you will, you are sure to meet with some one whom you know, or by whom you are known ; and take up any one of the *noomerous noowspapers*, (cocknice dictum) and the chances are that before you have skimmed it through — for no one *reads* a paper nowadays — you recognize some old friend or acquaintance as

having been buried, married, or in some other unpleasant predicament. To me the only pure enjoyment of the broad sheet is an accompaniment obligato to my matutinal mocha, over a good fire, *si hyems erit*, or with open casements, when Sirius rages. I feel primed then for the day, and ready to go off any where at a moment's notice. A few weeks since, when the papers were very dull, before the elections were even anticipated, and I was seeking solace amidst horrid murders, shocking suicides, and Platonic crim. cons., I was attracted by an article, copied from a Cornwall County Chronicle, which ran thus : — “ Accident at sea—one man drowned—name unknown — boy—the only one on board—saved—but life almost extinct; further particulars in our next.” In a few days afterwards, it was quite clear that some penny-a-liner had discovered the value of the “ event that had just come off,” and had exercised his verbosity on the occasion, or, in other words, “ made the most of it.” Compressing the column and half into plain English, I found that Mr. Heavy-sides, the county coroner, and twelve substantial

yeomen, had sat for six hours on the body of one Samuel Smyth, who was drowned by the upsetting of his favourite yacht, the Merry-go-round, while sailing in the bay of Trevenny, on the coast of Cornwall, as was proved by the evidence of his servant, James Jobs, the *boy*, sixty years' old, who narrowly shared his master's fate, but was saved by squatting *classically* on the keel, like Bacchus on a beer-barrel. The only cause alleged was "want of ballast," and the verdict was, of course, "found drowned" on the man, and "overset" on the boat, which was accordingly very properly deodanded, and sold again immediately, to give Mr. Heavysides and his substantial jurymen another opportunity of resting his and their ponderous person and persons, by sitting on the unfortunate purchaser.

The name struck me. I had known a Sam Smyth of our College, intimately, some years ago, and I fancied it must be my old chum; but all my doubts on the subject were ended by the butler's boy, who next morning brought me a letter to this effect, as nearly as I can recollect.

“ Reverend Sir,

“ As sole executor and residuary legatee of Rev. Samuel Smyth, suddenly and accidentally deceased, we beg your earliest personal (if convenient) attendance at Trevenny, Cornwall, to settle matters in question.

“ We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

“ NIBSON AND INKSPOT,

“ Attorneys-at-Law and Solicitors.

“ To Rev. the Bursar,

“ St. Peter's College, Oxon.”

Pithy and pertinent, I thought ; but thoughts, I thought again, would not satisfy Messrs. Nibson and Inkspot. I accordingly availed myself of a seat on the box of the Neck-or-Nothing opposition fast coach, and by great good luck, or rather, perhaps, by the doctrine of chances, as the Neck-or-Nothing had upset the day before, and killed “ the best whip on the road, four outsides, and crippled an *in*,” I arrived in safety at Trevenny, and, looking out for the largest red house in the town, with the largest brass-plate on a green door, of course found the

domicilium of the solicitors, or, as they, eschewing common law, in common with all country lawyers, preferred being termed, conveyancers, a term their clients seldom hesitated bestowing on them at the end of each term, but especially at Christmas.

I gave a pretty considerable loud rat-tat at the green door, to let them know I was not come to a common lawyer's on common business, and was congéd by a cringing crop-haired clerk into "the office," and informed that Mr. Nibson was just now *very particularly* engaged with a client on *very particular* business, but would feel *particular* pleasure in waiting on me as soon as the *particular* consultation was over. Mr. Inkspot was gone into the country on *very particular* business ; and Mr. Closecrop vanished *backwards*, with a wriggle and twist, and my card in his hand, like an eel in a wall, politely declining a sniggler's offer of a lobworm.

I endeavoured to amuse the interesting company in which I was left—my own—by reading the various titles on sundry tin boxes, painted raisin-fashion in Japanese, and conspicuously

chalked with all the great names in the neighbourhood ; and by walking to the windows, and returning the stares of the natives—a very primitive set. I admired the neat little church, and snug parsonage, as I supposed it was, just over the way ; an edition of a house in 24mo., as compared with the quarto, with extra margin, and well gilt, of Messrs. Nibson and Inkspot ; and was just beginning to philosophize on the enormous wealth of the established church, and her overpaid ministers, when the door opened suddenly, and admitted an homuncule, of about four feet three, very dapper in appearance, and over-obsequious in manner. His dress was anomalous ; he wore round his neck, if neck it might be called, which was a mere point of junction between the head and shoulders, a sky-blue stock, over which the cheeks crushed down a pair of rounded collars, worked at the edges ; a rose-coloured dressing-gown, of some tarnished fabrique, and a suit of nankeen dittos — that is, unnameables and gaiters in continuation.

I afterwards learnt that Mr. Nibson's begetter had been confidential agent, steward, &c.

&c., to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Rentborough, who, from the badness of the times, and other causes, was compelled to live abroad to retrench—that is, to spend all his income, and a little more, at Naples, or Florence, instead of at Trevenny Park. Nibson, sen., had already closed his accounts with his master here below, and had, luckily, so far avoided the example of extravagance set him by his employer, that he had died “warm,” and established Nibson, jun., as confidential agent, &c., in his room, with the additional advantage of a legal education, and a brass plate on his door, legibly inscribed attorney-at-law. Several excellent farms in the neighbourhood, formerly belonging to Trevenny Park, had been sold, it was said; the purchasers’ persons were never known—but what matter?—Nibson, jun., *received* the rents and profits for them, and, doubtless, gave a receipt in full.

Inkspot, as I learnt from the same source, the landlord of the Rentborough Arms, was a *lusus naturæ*, he had no earthly father! The entry in the parish register described him as illegiti-

mate — his mother being Mary, the dairy-maid at Trevenny Park. He was educated, first at Christ's Hospital, and afterwards at the free school at Trevenny, where he always had plenty of pocket-money and eatables, particularly custards and syllabubs ; a pony to ride out with the hounds, and, at a suitable age, was *notched*, as he called it, alluding to his *indentures*, to Nibson, with one-third of the business in prospect. No one *knew* whose son he was, but old Nibson paid his bills, and the Viscount *tipp'd* him, whenever he met him ; but I shall introduce him presently. After Nibson had bobbed twenty times consecutively, as nearly as I could calculate, he pointed to a chair, and, with difficulty placing himself on another, so as to make one foot rest on the ground, he applied his mouchoir (a very handsome green silk, with geranium-flowered border) to his eyes, or rather his cheeks, for they acted as two bastions to protect his optics, and pointing with his thumb "over the left," at the snug little parsonage I had before observed, uttered a deep sigh.

"Really, Mr. Nibson," said I, after due con-

sideration, "I cannot *quite* understand your opening of the case."

"*He* lived *there*," sighed Nibson, "*pectore ab imo*," and that was from no great distance.

"*He!* who? — what, my old friend, Sam Smyth?"

"Yes, sir; the Reverend Samuel Smyth, our never-to-be-enough-regretted curate. The parties of whose death we instructed you; buried yesterday — would n't keep — weather hot — blow-flies un-keep-off-able."

"Really," said I, "Mr. Nibson, your concise summons to Trevenny rather surprised me, as I have not seen my old college chum for many years; but, being an idle man just now, and, having a remembrance of our former intimacy at Alma Mater, I am here to do what little good I can for his wife and family — if he has left any such incumbrances."

"Sir," said Nibson, "he was not married, luckily."—(Nibson *was*—"Equam *servare* memento," he construed, "mind and *be a slave* to your wife.") "And I fear that the duties of the executorship will be hardly compensated by the profits of the residuary legateship!"

“He was poor, then?”

“Very; though the curacy is a good one as times go—lots of applicants for it. We’re the rector—give a title—snug house—£45 per annum—surplice fees—now and then two guineas for a new vault—dinner at the park, Sundays, when the family’s at home. Living dirt cheap, if a man’s fond of fish—population small—soles abundant—capital fried!”

“Did my poor friend manage to keep himself, his horse, his yacht, the Merry-go-round, and James Jobs, on £45 per annum?”

“Oh, no!—lucky man! got £20 additional for one duty a Sunday at Pendean—only four miles off—nice walk over the cliffs, particularly in windy weather—besides, he was capital shot—gun kept him in flesh and fowl—splendid fisherman—Merry-go-round and Jem Jobs profitable concerns. My partner, Isaac Inkspot, nice young man—rather too tall for a lawyer—obliged to stoop to his work, instead of looking up in his profession—hah!—oh! hum!—he!—lodged with him—took half the house off his hands, and lent him his housekeeper when

he did n't want her himself — liberal man — very !”

“Then I think,” said I, “the better plan will be to go at once to the parsonage, and search his division of the house for the will, and examine the property.”

“Certainly,” said Nibson — “anticipatory proposal ! But first allow me to introduce my excellent partner—Mr. Inkspot — Reverend the Bursar, gent. from Oxford ; executor and residuary legatee of our poor parson ; put in his appearance at once.”

Mr. Inkspot had evidently been out “on *very particular* business in the country,” if one might judge by his appearance. He was, in person, the exact antithesis of Nibson, stood six-feet-two or three, very scraggy, and very loose ; his dress was buckskins and tops, with broad Brummagem persuaders annexed — a green coat of the species formerly called duckhunters, but modernized into cutaways ; buff waistcoat, large shawl neckerchief, an Osbaldeston tile, as he called his hat — with a glass fixed to the brim, for he professed shortsightedness : under his

arm he carried the *handle* of a hunting-whip, the lash having been removed to indicate that "the season" was over.

"Ah, Nibby! — do?" in the tone familiar. "Reverend sir, most obedient!" to me—in tone vulgar and half deferential—Nibson eyeing me all the time closely, to observe the impression which his partner's superior appearance, as he thought, could not fail to make upon me. I could scarcely refrain from bursting into a loud laugh, as this two yards and a nail of legal puppyism rolled himself into a chair, and, coolly laying his whip over Nibby's shoulders, asked:—

"What's up? eh, Nibby?"

"Just going over to inspect premises — take inventory — read will, and give up possession—after payment of all demands," (*sotto voce*).

"Mr. Inkspot," said I, "excuse me; but do the Cornwall hounds hunt at this season of the year?"

"Hunt? oh, no! can't conceive! don't take! ain't awake! obtuse—very!"

"I imagined from your dress," I observed,

“it was possible you had been out to kill a late fox.”

“Dress? oh, no! always dress so—my horse likes it — the people approve, and don’t know when I am up to a spree out of the common. Rentborough—good fellow—very! leaves all to me—just been seeing the kennel properly cleaned out, and drafting the puppies — *very particular* in those matters, ain’t we, Nibby?—very!”

“And I trust you have been equally *particular* in the arrangement of my poor deceased friend’s affairs,” said I.

“Who, me? know nothing of them — leave all that sort of thing to Nibby! don’t I, Nibby? (whip again)—hate the law, and all that.”

I saw that Nibson observed my astonishment, which I fondly imagined was only *inward*, and he endeavoured to prolong his leg to tread on his partner’s toes; but Inkspot either did not witness the attempt, or, which is quite as likely, despised it, for he coolly went on:—

“I’m not a sleeping partner, though, am I, Nibby? No! I warrant the horses certify the breed of the draft hounds — advertise the meets

— publish the runs, and make myself generally useful — eh, Nibby? — very ! Do n't buy the nags now—got bit once or twice — deep—very ! leave that to Jem and Bill — suspect they bite now and then."

"Assure you," said Nibson, looking apologetic, "partner, invaluable to our valued friend and client, Viscount Rentborough!—seem to be mutually made for each other; must keep up the hounds, or lose influence in the county—borough safe enough — dare n't wag an inch without us. Yet we're liberal at elections, ain't we, Mr. Isaac? — very ! Our member, Hon. Mr. Stumpup, gives two pounds for tea for the ladies, and puts a boy in the Bluecoat-school once in seven years—good thing for the borough — (*I was lucky enough to get in—very !*) — *We* give a free and easy at 'the Arms,' at two shillings a head — pleasant party — very ! beer excellent —."

I here ventured to suggest proceeding to business, as I was anxious to return to Oxford.

Nibson and Mr. Isaac rose accordingly, the latter continuing to rise — rise — rise — like a

scarlet-runner in a damp summer's evening — till, I thought, like the Lyric poet, he would strike the stars with his lofty head. We crossed the road, Mr. Isaac leading, and opening the gate (after "Nibby" had in vain essayed, by tiptoeing, to reach the latch,) ushered me into a very neat little room.

"Parson's parlour—pretty look out — church one side—sea the other—yacht in sight—bay to the left—capital place for snipes and wild-ducks — river to the right — trout and salmon — fly-fishing unequalled — parson, regular dab at whipping—spun a minnow magnificently!"

On surveying the room, I saw that Inkspot's remarks on my friend's proficiencies were partially confirmed by its contents: in one corner stood a double gun, both barrels loaded, and caps ready on—an old rusty jacket, a quondam black velveteen, hanging on a nail above it, with a dog-whip and shot-belt peering out of the pocket; over the fireplace was a huge single for wild-fowl, and a canister for powder padlocked, and inscribed "patent safety;" in another corner was a creel, three or four fishing-

rods, a large bag of feathers, hare's ears, hog's down, water-rat skins, and other essentials for fly-making; a lump of cobbler's wax in an old glove, a landing-net, minnow-can, casting-net, and half a hundred other requisites for Waltonizing; over the window was a trout and eel-spear, reaching the whole length of the room, and opposite the fire was a bit of furniture, evidently formed on college reminiscences — the lower part being a cupboard for miscellanies, and the upper a bookcase conveniently covered in, so as to suit many other purposes, besides the one its deceitful name imported.

In the lower regions of this useful piece of furniture, I found his old college writing-desk and tea-caddy. I could swear to both; the same dinginess of exterior intimated the identity of the contents; by them stood a few bottles, pickle-jars, glasses, cruets, and other table-ware; in short, it was a poor bachelor's butler's-pantry. The upper division, or bookcase, contained his college classics on its lower shelf; a moderate collection of MS. sermons, with some chiefly compiled and ticketed for certain Sundays and

Holy-days, were arranged on the second ; the upper shelf was devoted to the stowage of sundries in the sporting line, the value of which none but an adept could appreciate.

As his executor, I, of course, opened the desk, for it was unlocked ; indeed, I recollected that he had lost the key years before, while bathing with me in Medley Lock. As he did not imagine that any one could be curious enough to investigate the contents of a writing-desk, he merely forced the lock with his bread-and-cheese knife when he got back to college, and fancied himself and the desk quite secure.

“ Not very business-like ; sorry to leave our papers so—eh ? Mr. Isaac ! ” said Nibson, with a wink peculiarly waggish, as I opened the unresisting depository of my friend’s secrets.

“ Why, yes — Nibby,” replied Inkspot, “ it might not be quite so well for some people,” putting his arms and head in a position which clearly showed he had seen *one* execution at least ; “ no danger there, however—know every paper by heart — chiefly recipes — a few choice songs—list of the sick in the parish—a diary of

killed and wounded — (that is partridges, &c., not parishioners) — pedigrees of puppies, and a few documents, dedicated without permission, from his tailor, grocer, and butcher — careless fellow ! very !—I see the receipts are unattached to most of the bills.”

I found that Isaac was not falsely boasting of his intimacy with the contents of the desk ; and being anxious to search further for any papers that might be of importance, and knowing Sam’s habits, I next scrutinized the tea-caddy. Upon lifting up the central ornament — an old cracked decanter filed down for a sugar-basin and the two “ wings ” for black and green which flanked the centre—I found, as I expected, several pieces of paper curiously folded and almost trituated to tinder. I opened one very gingerly, and with difficulty deciphered with the help of the partners, Nibson and Inkspot, who both seemed “ eager for the fray,” the following important document :

“ A KEWER FOR FUTSORE.

“ Tak the liker in wich sum salt bif ave bin bild as ot as u can abear it, and sit with yer fit

in it for an our or too wile u smokes yur pipe—
dont wipe um, but dry um afore the fier — the
necs momin u wil find um stif, and smart no-ow-
like — but after u ave bin in the wet sweads or
the peat-pits, they wil be as lissum as ever.

“ DAN. STUART.

“ Sir,—I allays as aff a croun for this un, cos
its a warranted un.”

The next was nearly as useful, and no doubt
as well worth half-a-crown to poor Sam.

“ HOW TO KITSH FISH WHEN NO ONE ELSE
CAN’T.

“ Take an art of oke boks, and rub him all
over inside with grundivey and asafetimus —
Take some ile of the same, and put it into sum
moss fresh of the grund, the grimest is best, and
drop it in rayther thik — then get sum Taners
wurms as ant got no nots in their tails, and after
kippin um for some days in clene moss, put um
into the boks of art of oke, and in 2 dais they
are fit for use. N.B.—never lend non of um to
nobody.

“ W. STUART, his + mark.”

The contents of the caddy were all much of the same nature, and I proposed to visit the dormitory to prosecute my search. Mr. Isaac accordingly led the way into a room, the facsimile of poor Sam's bedroom at Oxford, with this difference only—it was not so *dirty*, and the adjoining room, which in college would have been a scout's room, was a sleeping-place for James Jobs—whom, to my great surprise, we found curled up in one corner, fast asleep.

While Nibson aroused James Jobs to assist us in our search for the will, I just threw my eyes round the sleeping-room. In one corner was a stump-bedstead, with a kind of dimity canopy, to make it look like a French bed—a regular forgery, as Isaac called it; a triangular washing apparatus in another corner; a chest of drawers under the window, with a towel on the top as a toilet-cloth, on which were laid out, as neatly as possible, a primitive array of decapillatory conveniences, or rather necessities; but the most striking object was the long array of shoes and boots of all lengths, breadths, and thicknesses; high-lows, low-highs, lace-ups,

mud-boots, waders, and snow-boots. If they were not waterproof, as they professed to be, the only question was, as it appeared to me, how they ever got dry and lissome again, when they were once wet. Across the room was fixed a stout ash pole, which would have puzzled most people, and given them an idea of a patent pre-meditated-suicidal-apparatus, or a drying-line of unnecessary stability ; but it was merely intended for gymnastics, *i. e.*, for twisting and twirling round until you had bruised your shins and dislocated almost every limb of your body—a medicine, certainly not an anodyne, to be taken every night and morning, as recommended by Mr. Surgeon Tugtail. On the wall (suspended by a few wafers) were some unframed prints, extracted from “ Daniel’s Rural Sports,” “ The Shooter’s Vade-Mecum,” and “ Walton’s Angler ;” and in a corner behind the door, a collection of weather clothing, contemporary with, and equally as efficacious, as the eucnemidals before alluded to.

“ Umph !—ha !—odd !—curious !—funny !—very !” said Nibson.

"Comfortable ! — convenient — very !" said Mr. Isaac.

"Very, indeed," said James Jobs, who entered with Mr. Nibson, and advancing quietly before the partners, made a low and respectful bow, and hoped my honour was quite well.

I returned the salutation of "the boy," as James was still called, though evidently sixty at least, but in such a way as not to indicate any recognition of a former acquaintance.

"You do not remember me, Mr. Bursar, I see," said James Jobs.

"I cannot," I replied, "recollect ever having seen you before ; but now that I observe that scar upon your forehead—surely you cannot be the poor soldier whom Sam and I took as valet from breaking stones on the road at fourpence a day, with the thermometer at zero, and whom we christened Friday?"

"The same, sir ; and had it not been for your kindness, I must have perished from cold and want."

The fact was, James Jobs, or Man Friday, as we called him at college, was of a respectable

tradesman's family near Oxford ; but, being of a " roving disposition," had, early in life, enlisted into a horse regiment, and served in the American war, where, in consequence of a severe sabre cut over the eyes, which had very nearly proved fatal, he got his discharge, and returned to England to find his family extinct, with the exception of one cousin, who was so much elevated in life as to disown poor James ; the result was, that he got a deal of pity, but no money ; and when the few friends who remembered him after twenty years' absence were tired of feeding him and listening to his tales of the wars, he was forced to apply to his parish ; the overseers of which, in kind consideration of the severity of the cold, set him to break stones on the road, at so much per bushel, by which he got warmth, and two shillings per week, paid at twice ; so that, after paying for a bundle of straw, and leave to sleep in a loft, he had not much left for meat and drink ; a red herring and two potatoes served him for two days, and his drink did not intoxicate him much, being chiefly Pindar's much-lauded *ariston*.

We saw the poor fellow at work as we were trying to warm our limbs up Headington Hill, and finding that he had served as an officer's servant in a cavalry regiment, and could look after a horse well, we engaged him at a trifle a week, and let him have the run of rack and manger. The day of his relief from starving and stone-breaking being Friday — and Robinson Crusoe's valet running in our heads — we termed James Jobs "Friday," and by that name he went, as long as Sam remained at college. It appeared that he had lived with my friend Sam, off and on, as he said, ever since, and had hoped not to outlive a master who, whether rich or poor, had always proved to him a kind friend.

When James had recovered himself, and could command his feelings sufficiently to address me again—"Sir," said he, "I am glad you are come down—I always told master you would stand his friend, and the assurance seemed to comfort him. I have here, sir, in this drawer, a letter and a packet which I was to give into your hands; the packet is bulky, and it took master many years to write it — but it amused him in the long eve-

nings, when his health would not allow him to enjoy his friends' fireside. Master, sir, was an odd man, and may be, the new-light people might think him a bad one, because he loved sporting. But what I look at, sir, is this, never was a man more beloved in the parish — his church was full of a Sunday, and he preached what we could all understand. If he offended any one, it would have been these gentlemen here," bowing to Nibson and Inkspot, "for he was a regular lawyer-starver, and settled all disputes quicker and cheaper than a chief-justice."

"Perfectly correct," said Nibson.

"True — very!" said his partner.

"And here," continued James Jobs, "is what master called his last testament, poor fellow — he had not much to will away, for he gave away all he could spare while he lived — and he lived the happier for it. He had but one fault that ever I found out, sir, and that was what lost him his life at last — *he wanted ballast* — and as Mr. Heavysides, the coroner, justly observed, that was what lost the Merry-go-round — *she wanted ballast*."

I cast my eye over the will and found that he had left every thing to me, including James Jobs — begging that I would merely distribute such of his property as I did not want in the following way:—to Nibson, his books, for his eldest boy's use — to Inkspot, his writing-desk, regretting that the key was lost — his guns, to the keepers at the park — his fishing-tackle, to James, who was as great a “killer” as his master — and his boots, shoes, and clothes, to the poorest of his parishioners, whose wants no one knew better than himself.

I gave orders to Nibson and Inkspot to dispose of the furniture, and distribute the proceeds of it among the poor of the parish generally, and took James Jobs and the parcel to the Rentborough Arms, where the worthy solicitors received a check from me to cover all their demands. Whether it was doubly gratifying on account of its being unexpected, or not, I don't know, but they became doubly civil, and even invited me to dinner. This I begged to decline, and bowed them out; and, ordering James to book two outsides, I started by the first coach, and after being regularly soaked here I am.

“ And where,” said our senior tutor, “ is James Jobs ? ”

“ Sound asleep in his old quarters by this time : I ordered him a commons, and a pint of the dean’s particular, as I came in, and rely on it he has since been to the stables and rubbed my horse down, and laid himself up in clover in the *tallet, as usual.* ”

“ And what,” said the vice-principal, “ did the parcel and letter contain ? ”

“ That,” said the Bursar, “ is at present a mystery. Peter ! ”

“ Sir ! ”

“ Send Mrs. Peter to warm my bed, and bring me *one* tumbler of brandy-and-water, hot and strong.”

“ Not a bad move,” said the chaplain—*et sic omnes.*

CHAPTER II.

WHEN the 1st of May, 1839, had arrived, and with it the new number of the *New Monthly*, I, Peter Priggins, went to the nearest book-seller's and bought it, saying it was for one of the undergraduates of St. Peter's — though my paying ready money for it was quite sufficient to convict me of obtaining it under false pretences — it was not acting in character.

I confess I felt more nervous on this occasion than I had supposed possible, and hid the volume in my pocket as quickly and carefully as a young poacher would his first wired hair, or a charity-schoolboy the first fruits of his nocturnal visit to a neighbouring orchard. “If,” said I, “I should actually be in print !” The very vertebræ of my back, which are usually bent slightly forward, from approaching old age, were imme-

diately straightened, or rather curved in a *vice versa* direction at the thought, and I hurried home to examine the bane or antidote of my anxiety — as the first peep might prove it to be — in private.

In vain I endeavoured to find the means of doing so at home. My old woman, by which familiar, though fond title Mrs. P. is generally known in college, except by undergraduates, who call her “Old Mother Priggins,” followed me from room to room with the same peculiarly suspicious or sagacious look with which she used to regard me in our younger days, when she imagined I was going to devour the contents of a smuggled bottle of port “to my own cheek,” that is, without allowing her an opportunity of proving herself my “better half.” As her suspicions were roused, I felt convinced that, if she should leave the room, it would only be to listen at the door, and that the rustle of the uncut leaves of the *New Monthly* would be construed, by her overcharged imagination, into the *bobbling-wobbling* noise caused by me in *gugbling* the wine from the neck of the bottle. I, there-

fore, like a skilful general, secured my success by a well-timed retreat.

It occurred to me that, as the college groves had been laid out at an enormous expense, for the express purposes of meditation in sweet solitude, and studious retirement, I should be sure to find them deserted. I accordingly sneaked in the back way, and found my expectations realized. I was alone ! and hastily opening my newly-purchased treasure turned to the awful words,

“ TO CORRESPONDENTS, &c., ”

where I fully expected to see “ Peter Priggins is an old fool ! The editor’s cook-maid, however, is grateful to him for a timely supply of curl-papers, so he may think himself lucky that his article has not proved altogether unserviceable ; ” or, “ *solve senescentem equum*, you, Peter P. are the *old ass* alluded to ; ” or some kind hint of the sort—but no ! I was “ accepted,” as the Freemasons say, so I got out my bread-and-cheese knife, and as rapidly as my trembling hands would allow me, “ cut my way bravely through,” to the spot on which all my hopes of

fame rested — and there, sure enough, I found *my article in printed characters!!!* I tried to read it—but in vain — I can't describe my feelings, or why I could not read in legible print what I had mumbled over and over again in illegible MS.; nor can I say what I *did*, but I've a faint recollection of having made an excessive fool of myself in a private way. I do recollect rushing to the buttery, and asking for a pint of the dean's particular, which, I fancied, tasted more delicious than usual, and smacked my lips at the aroma that rested upon them.

"I consider," said Spigot the butler, evidently pleased at my appreciating his manufacture, "that that's the best beer in—"

"The *New Monthly Magazine*," said I.

"Oxford," continued Spigot. "Better was never brewed by—"

"The editor," said I, again lowering my jug.

"Messrs. Squashy and Washy, the great—"

"Publisher in Great Marlborough Street," said I.

"Brewers," ended Spigot, who bore my interruptions with more philosophy than I should have

given him credit for ; but that I am aware he is usually as full of beer of his own brewing as I was then of the article of my own writing ; *id est*, “full to the bung.” In saying that I was *composed* by my libation, I mean not to insinuate that Spigot used narcotics in his malt—he was too wide awake at all hours, though he kindly condescended to drink several quarts of his best, in the course of the day, *for* those gentlemen who forgot to drink it for themselves. *Great* is the enmity between him and a water-drinker ! *laudes redde domino !* But to return to me and my article. I did not say one word about it, even to my wife, that night ; but the next morning I stepped down to College, called on one of my old masters, and told him of my success. He ordered me to leave the book with him, and call again. I did so.

“ Peter,” said he, smiling, “ you are an independent member of society ! take a bottle of the oldest port from the furthest bin, and drink success to your bantling. But,” as he returned the book, “ *draw it mild.*” I did as I was desired then, and mean to do so always.

As I found I had not offended my superiors by “my life and times,” I wished to ascertain what my compeers would say about it; and though I fully expected to meet with a share of that envy which invariably attends on superiority, I confess I did not expect precisely the reception I met with, on entering the parlour of the Shirt and Shotbag — a respectable public, where college-servants and little (*non quoad corpora*) tradesmen meet, to their mutual enlightenment on subjects private and public — *generally* in a peaceable and quiet way; but on this occasion “opinion,” as Euripides says, “went divided through the warlike army of the scouts;—to some, it seeming good, to others, not,” that I should venture to risk the reputation of the fraternity, by becoming an author, and publishing to the world things “that ought to be hidden under many a leaf,” as Flaccus has it.

To the elder brethren of the pail and pump-handle, my explanations were quite satisfactory; but the younger branches of the profession who were present, being enrolled as members of the new “institution for promoting the quicker

march of mechanism and morality," were, of course, too conceited to listen to any one but themselves, and I was fearful of being obliged to resort to more powerful arguments than words, when the *ringing* of twenty or thirty bells saved me the trouble of performing that operation on their juvenile noses. College dinners were waiting for them — to wait on their masters — so they could not wait at the Shirt and Shot-bag to annoy us any longer.

I found myself left in the company of my friends Broome, of Ch. Ch. College, and Dusterly, of St. Mark's, like myself, retired bed-makers—men who had wisely adopted Horace's motto, "*pone moras et studium lucri*," by giving up their lazy habits and hopes of extra fees, for the more rational, though no less professional delights of beer and *baccur*, as they invariably pronounce it at the "society of science and sociability," lately founded by Squashy and Washy, the great brewers before alluded to, in opposition to "The Society of Aquarians," who wish to substitute scalded succory for swipes, and the liquor of bad burnt beans for beer.

“Priggins,” said Broome, after taking kindly the head off the pint I had just ordered in, which he had a right to do, having the advantage of me by three inches in height, twelve in girth, and five years’ seniority in college ; “Priggins, I feel grateful to you for your services to college-servants, a race of men who have hitherto been expected to see all and say nothing. It becomes you, as a retired man, to be constantly before the public ; and since the publication of Drunken Barnaby’s journal, and the somniferous recipes of Cicero Kewkes, the public have been deprived of all opportunity of seeing into the nature of life in Oxford, the works which now and then emanate from the university press being too light for general reading, and but little known elsewhere. I trust, therefore, you will persevere ; and any little help I can give you, command it ; for, though not a dab at a dictionary, I’m down to all their doings, from fifty to five hundred a year.”

“And I,” said Dusterly, quietly absorbing the corpus of my pint, of which Broome had taken off the caput (*jam mortuum et sepultum*),

leaving me no residuum ; “ I willingly pledge myself (I wished he had done it in his own beer) to haid so huseful a hobject.”

I politely remarked that it was not necessary for him to lay so much stress on his words to convince me of his sincerity, and thought the most acceptable mode of proving my gratitude for their kind offers was to order another pint, and drink their healths, and many thanks to them, for their obliging intentions, which I did in a bumper, and no heel-taps.

“ I am particularly delighted,” continued Broome, “ with your remarks on the great ignorance one meets with *out of* Oxford ; but knowing that fact, as you did and do, you ought to be more compassionate, and explain as you go along.”

“ Yes,” chimed in Dusterly ; “ow can you himagine has hany of them hignoramuses knows hany thing about a common-room or a bursar ? I pledge myself (which he would have done in my jug again, if it had not been empty) to prove that they fancy a common-room is a coffee-room at a hinn ; and a bursar a bagman, from your

description of his coming him hoff a journey, and drinking his bottoms of brandy."

"And I wonder," resumed Broome, "what they take a scout and bedmaker to be?"

"I'll bet pints round," said Dusterly, chuckling at his notion, "they fancy him a hamphibious hanimal,—a cross between a harrand-boy and a chambermaid."

"Well, gentlemen," said I, "I'm obliged by the hints you have given me ; but I feel easy on that subject, as some of our old masters, who are scattered every where over the face of the globe, will readily explain these difficulties if referred to. So, as you, Mr. Dusterly, seem to have got your steam up, perhaps you would favour me with a few more valuable hints?"

"No," said Dusterly ; "I never like to happen *too* knowing:—it gets a man into a scrape sometimes."

"True," remarked Broome ; "I know a case in point, which occurred to an old Westminster—I heard him tell it at a wine-party, up one of my staircases, No. 4, Tom Quad, three pair to the left. The conversation was running high,

about racing, and hunting, and so on—and a little freshman was going no-end-of pace about what he had done and could do, and so on,—as freshmen are wont to do, — when the old Westminster pulled him up all of a heap with a double chiffney, and gave him a broad hint how to behave himself, which I will tell you in his own words, as nigh as I can remember them. It was when Sir Thomas Mostyn was alive ; so I call it

A DAY WITH SIR THOMAS.

“ When I came up to reside,” he began, “ I confess I knew little of riding, much less of hunting ; and the little knowledge I had of riding was more theoretical than practical ; my performances having been limited to the donkey which we bullied on the common at home in the holidays, and the old pony that had carried the whole family for twelve years at least ; whose hide was stick-proof, and whose paces were reduced to two—one, slow, lingering and unwilling *from* the stable ; another quicker, livelier, and sometimes attended with indecent capers *to* his rack and manger. Still, while at Westminster,

whenever hunting foxes or hares was talked of, or coursing or racing (steeple-chasing was not invented then, the country not being too thickly populated), I felt unwilling to acknowledge that my father was either too poor, too stingy, or too timid, to allow me to join in these manly amusements; and by picking up a few slang phrases from others, sneaking about the livery-stables in Westminster, chaffing with the grooms and coachmen, while waiting for their masters, about 'the houses,' I began to talk loudly of bulfinches and raspers, the long tails and the slips; and offered and took the odds on the favourite for the Derby or the Leger; and by my skill in hedging and making up a book, not only astonished my friends, but myself. In short, I told more lies about the matter in one day then, than I could now invent in a week.

"My great misfortune was, as you will see by and by, that I could lie in safety, as our racing at school was confined to boat-racing, and our hunting to running after one another, sometimes with a strongish scent in the air, too, in Tothill Fields, and I talked so *well* and so *off-*

handedly, that no one dreamed I was coming Munchausen over him.

“I was once very nearly caught out at it ; *unfortunately* I was not. According to my account, my father, though he did not actually keep the hounds of the Northamptonshire hunt, was by far the largest subscriber to them, had the management of the kennel, and kept six hunters for his own use ; having always two out in the field, and hunting three times a week, besides cover-hacks, buggy-horses, and ponies for us boys.

“I had told this story so often, that I not only imposed upon others, but began to entertain some doubts myself whether the stud was merely an imaginary one ; when, one day, as I was standing, talking *sporting*, and making a lash of twisted string to tie on to a hooked stick, as a feeble imitation of a hunting-whip, a new boy was brought in, and of course subjected to the usual pertinent, if not *impertinent* questions, ‘What’s your name—eh spoony?’ with a cut on the face.

“ ‘Stig—Stig—Stig — Stiggins,’ replied the

novelty, blubbing at the unexpected warmth of his welcome.

“ ‘Come, none o’ that, you little beggar,’ said another boy, who, setting matters even, by an application to his head’s antipodes, asked him, ‘What’s your governor?’

“ ‘A p—p—pars—parson.’

“ ‘What! do you mean a methodist parson?’ and to try his Christian humility he was smitten on the other cheek likewise.

“ ‘No; he’s rec — rec — rector of Clodpolecum-Bumpkin in Northamptonshire.’

“ ‘All right! how much money have you got — eh? did your governor stump up like a brick — eh? What’s your tip?’

“ ‘A suf—sufferin, and if I want any more, I’m to ask a boy named John Hallum for some — he’s our squire’s son.’

“ ‘Hullo! Jack Hallum! here! you’re wanted,’ cried twenty voices to me at once, as I was sneaking off the moment I heard the brat’s name and address. ‘Here’s a little kivey from your part of the world, who says you’re to be his banker, for he knows you at home; and I

dare say his mother expects you to wash his feet and comb his hair. Have you got a small-tooth and scrubbing-brush, you little varmint?’

“Poor Stiggins, to whom this was addressed, stared in amazement at a question he could not understand; but, before it could be repeated, one of the big boys, who had, perhaps, doubted the genuineness and authenticity of some of my *strainers*, or was vexed at his own being eclipsed by them, came up, and, in a kinder tone than little Stiggins had yet heard in college, inquired how far he lived from me.

“‘Only just outside the park,’ was the answer.

“‘And how many horses does old Hallum keep, my little man?’

“‘Two, now, a four-wheeler, and the post-man’s pony—that un as you broke his knees, Master John,’ meaning me.

“I saw a knowing wink and a meaning smile pass round the circle of my old admirers, and I knew how thoroughly I was *done*, if once found out, so giving Stiggins a flick on his haunches with the whip, catching him by the scruff of his neck, ‘Come here, you little lying son of a

tithe-pig,' said I, 'come with me, and I'll oblige your governor and governess by taking care of you as you deserve.'

"I lugged him off to my room as quickly as I could, and there told him, that as I chose my father to have six hunters, and no end of hacks and brood mares, he must back my assertions, and I'd say his father kept his carriage, and his sisters had a grand-piano; but, if he dared to split on me, I'd not only swear his father was cut by all the country for going drunk to a funeral, but that his eldest sister had had a child by the gardener.

"This, and the sight of the whip I was just finishing off, had the desired effect, and I told more lies, of a much superior description, than I did before his arrival, appealing to him for confirmation of them — with, 'Did n't I, Stiggins?' — 'Of course—to be sure—I remember it well.' It was not likely that he had *forgotten* what he had never heard of before.

"When I went down to Oxford to enter, I got up enough information in my old way, to return and give the most splendid description of

a run I had had with the Craven, that beat Tom Smith's out and out; so that when I came into residence, I was expected to be a very fast man, and had to tell more lies than ever, to explain how the governor was selfish enough to keep all his horses at home, and to threaten me with stopping the supplies, if I ever hunted or rode up at Oxford.

“But ‘*culpam pœna premit comes*,’ as Horace very justly observes. That same big boy, now a little man, Tom Sharpe by name, who had always suspected me at school, was doubtless confirmed in his views of my character, and laid a trap for me. He invited me to a wine-party at his rooms, and as the champagne circulated, and the claret flowed, my ideas enlarged, and I certainly succeeded in astonishing every man there, even an A. B., of master's standing.

“Tom Sharpe, who saw the time was come, rose and proposed my father's health, as a man to whom the county of Northampton was deeply indebted for his zeal and liberality, in promoting the noble sport of fox-hunting.

“‘Hallum and the hounds! Hip—hip—hip

—hurrah ! Nine times nine ! One cheer more !
Yoicks !—tally ho !—hark forward !—go it, ye
cripples !—jingle, jingle, jingle — crash, smash,
rattle — rap, rap, rap — who-hoop !’ and down
sat the company, exhausted with their efforts to
do honour to me and the toast.

“ I replied modestly and appropriately, which
elicited a fainter repetition of the former cheers.
When they had subsided :—

“ ‘ I say, old fellow !’ said Tom Sharpe, ‘ we’ve
heard you talk a good deal about your leaps and
all that, and devilish well you do *talk*, but we’ve
never seen you *do* it. Now, I’ll give you a
mount to-morrow. You shall ride my Randy-
rasper — we have an excellent meet, and shall
have capital sport — sure to find, and in a
country that will just suit you, who prefer brooks
to stone walls.’

“ ‘ Hurrah !’ cried the rest, ‘ you’re a capital
fellow, Tom — wish you’d mount us all. You
can’t refuse, Hallum—eh ?’

“ In vain I hinted at my vow to the governor
—my being obliged to go to three lectures, and
my private coach on the morrow ; and, as a last

resource, to the fact of my boots and breeches—white cords were all the go then — being left in the country, and my pink being quite too small for me. I was promised every thing for a complete set-out, and went to bed nearly dead drunk, with the pleasing conviction on what little of my mind I had left, that I should be quite *dead* next night, without the satisfaction of being *drunk* too.

“If going to sleep was bad enough under this impression, what were my feelings on awaking in the morning? I sat up in bed—my head aching ready to split—my tongue feeling like a bit of stale hung-beef in my parched mouth. My stomach! — oh! dear! — and my nervous system not shaken, but completely shattered. At last I consoled myself with the thought that my crippled state was just the lucky thing to release me from my unlucky engagement, and I was trying to write a note to Tom Sharpe, containing, in a shaky scrawl, a piteous statement of my case, and begging to be excused, when his servant entered my room, with a pair of *tops* in one hand, and the rest of the dress for

the 'character' I fancied I should play for that 'one day only' in the other; and, touching his hair with one finger, said :—

“ ‘Master’s compliments, sir, the grub’s on the table, and the trap ordered at hart-arter nine, and he hopes as ow you’ll clean yourself as quick as bricks.’

“ ‘But, James,’ said I, ‘I really feel very ill; I was just going to send a note to your master, to say I could not join him to-day.’

“ ‘Master von’t take no excuse,’ replied James, looking determined, *propositi tenax*, ‘for he knows you was bosky last night, and in course, qualmy this morning; and the physic’s ready what’ll set you all right in *no time*.’

“ ‘Physic?’

“ ‘Yes, a hot mash, as you’ll lap up in *no time*, and feel yourself as full of beans as a grocer’s coffee-mill; but I must cut my lucky, sir, as master’s a waiting to be rubbed down ready for starting.’

“As James or Jim, as his familiars called him, would not await any further expostulation, I began to dress. Imitating as closely as I could

the correct men of that day, I took particular care to slew the buttons at the knees well forward in a slanting-dicular direction, and to push the boots down into the most desirable wrinkles. I put my hat on knowingly, with the ribbon fluttering in sight, which was to be confined to my collar as a *beaver-catcher* during the run ; and, putting my heavy-handled whip under my left arm, with the lash dangling about, squared my elbows, pulled on my Woodstocks, and started, not a little pleased at my personal appearance, which I took care should not be lost on the college ; for I went under one excuse to the buttery, and another to the kitchen ; then stood in quad, and called loudly for my scout ; and when I thought all had been sufficiently gratified with the sight of the gentleman in pink, I turned out of college, and walked to — Coll. at the same deliberate pace, and with the same gracious intentions to the public in general, as I had just evinced to my own college in particular, which induced a little dirty-nosed snob to cry out to one of his friends :—

“ ‘I say, Bill, twig that ere *scarlet-runner* ;— an’t he vun to go the pace?’

“ I felt the insult, but did not express my indignation ; and, climbing up to Tom Sharpe’s garret, found him, with two other men, pitching into underdone beefsteaks and kidneys, and washing them down with porter, in a way that surprised and disgusted me not a little, for they were just as drunk as I was over-night.

“ ‘Hulloh ! old fellow,’ cried Tom, ‘why you have n’t been fool enough to come out in pink without your great-coat and leggings on? You’ll nap it, my boy ! You know your dons won’t stand that. But, come, fall to — time’s short—weather muggy—roads woolly, and whipcord scarce.’

“ I shuddered at the food, like a Jew at a pork-chop; which Tom observing, he went on :—

“ ‘Beg pardon, old fellow—I forgot Jim said you were off your feed, and wanted a drench — here, put your muzzle into this, and mop it up as quick and as hot as you can, and I’ll bet the long odds you’ll be all right before we get to Bicester.’

“He put a neat silver tankard into my *fore foot*, as he called my hand, and the very odour of it was enough to gratify a dowager-duchess—the taste!—ye gods!—but, as I am not selfish, I’ll tell you the contents—*probatum est*.

“Boil four glasses of jelly in a pint of the best Madeira, in a *silver* vessel; add two glasses of Curaçoa, and a little *powdered* cinnamon, cloves, mace, and nutmeg!—a drink for *two*!—the which, if they don’t ‘drinkee for drunkee,’ they’ll get ‘drunkee for drinkee.’

“After imbibing about half a pint of this ambrosial nectar, and nibbling a hot ginger-nut, I felt much better, and rather saucy. Jim came in to say the buggies were ready; and the trio lighting their cigars, in which I could not venture to join them, we started for Kickum’s livery-stables.

“‘Now,’ said Tom, ‘tumble in, old fellow; I’m waggoner—you pay pikes. The *old* flogger, Jim; the clouds look watery.’ So, taking a shabby, but straight-cropped whip from Jim, and sticking it upright by his side, away we went at a trot about fourteen miles an hour,

with our two friends in a hack dennet behind, making up by a gallop now and then.

“When we got to Deakins’s at Bicester, where we were to leave the buggy and mount our horses, I felt so very queer again, that Tom thought the dose he had administered before starting had failed for once ; so, ringing the bell, he ordered a bottle of brown stout and some bread and cheese.

“‘*I always,*’ said he, ‘stick to the *Brunonian* system, and keep up to the mark—you ’ll feed a little now, and be all right soon.’

“I tried to eat, but my larynx, or fauces, or whatever the pill-grinders call one’s swallow, felt so dry, I could not ; so, pouring down two tumblers of the stout, I proposed to be off. Having made up my mind to be killed, I thought that the sooner the *throw off* took place the better. The *suspense* is the worst part of it, as the man allowed, previously to his being *turned off*.

“I found Randy-rasper in the yard, and mounted her successfully, and felt as long as we kept the road it would be ‘all right,’ as Jim

said; but we *met* just out of the town, and in less than five minutes found ourselves among a hundred and fifty men at least.

“Uninitiated as I then was in the mysteries of Nimrodism, I could twig the difference between the regular-bred old stagers and the young would-be’s, and comforted myself with the conviction that I was not the only fool going to ‘risk his reputation on a horse’s back;’ and if Tom had allowed me to sneak about where I liked, I should have done very well; but neither he nor his mare would allow me to part company, so great was her attachment to her master, or his horse, her fellow-slave.

“I won’t detain you with an account of the hounds and horses, or the names, weights, and colours of the riders; suffice it to say, all was done that judgment and skill could suggest, but Pug could not be found; and after trying five or six covers we found ourselves—at a place called Claydon (upper, middle, or east, I forget which)—obliged, to my secret delight, and Tom Sharpe’s evident disgust, to give it up as a blank day; at the same time, I of course outwardly

d—d my ill-luck, and was congratulating myself on showing off in a quiet canter to Bicester on the turnpike road, and lying like blazes when I got to college again, when a tall, gentlemanly-looking man, on a splendid gray—his scarlet frock and stained tops looking like work—rode up, and addressing Tom, who, I thought at the time, looked wicked, ‘presumed we were Oxford men, and that our hacks were at Bicester; and, if we would allow him, would show us across country, and save us two miles at least, especially as our hunters were fresh!’

“Tom thanked him, and after making a few observations on the day, and the scarcity of foxes, he turned through a gap into a grass ground, and cantered gently ahead—Tom next, and I in the rear. I liked it amazingly at first, and clearing two furrows, at least eighteen inches wide, and a narrow ditch into the next ground, without losing a stirrup, began to fancy I could *do* it as it should be.

“Our pace gradually quickened, still nothing occurred to frighten me till we came to a gaping ditch, full of water, with what I thought an awful

hedge on the other side. ‘ You must ram them at it, gentlemen,’ said our guide, and he and Tom were over in *no time*, as Jim would have said. ‘ Forward!’ cried both, and away I went, Jupiter only knows how or where; but I stuck on somehow, and found myself going along, at a slapping pace, over a deep fallow — then partly through, and partly over, a stiff thorn fence—then between two ash-trees, so close together as to threaten destruction to both my knees at once. Here my hat being knocked off, and bounding against my back, still holding on by the ribbon, made the sort of rattling noise the dealers make with their hats and sticks, when they are ‘ showing out a horse.’ This put Randy-rasper on her mettle, and my knees beginning to grow weak, and my strength to fail me, I shouted out as loud as I could to ‘ pull up;’ but Tom, purposely and maliciously mistaking my shouts, joined with our leader in ‘ Yoicks! forward! well done, my boy—go *it*!’ I gave myself up as lost—I seemed to fly, or rather hedges, trees, brooks, walls, and houses seemed to fly by me and I to stand stock-still. The last thing I recollect *seeing* was a hah-

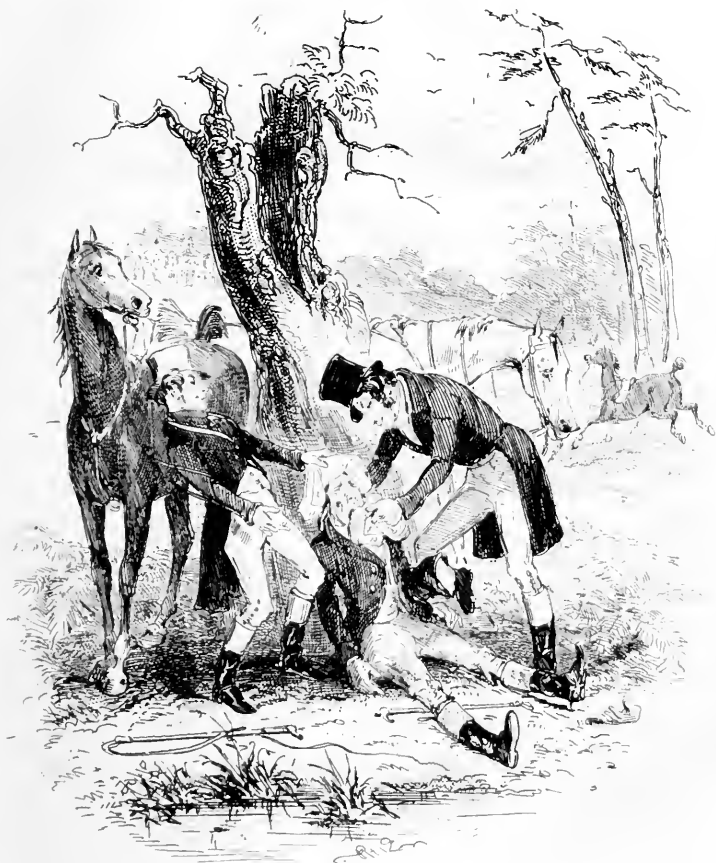
hah ! with an enormous wall and a wire fence on the top of it. I closed my eyes in the last agonies of despair, and opened them again, as I thought, after a minute or even a second, though it appears I was insensible for nearly an hour. I am *now* convinced I was *not sensible* when I started from Oxford.

“ When I came to myself I found I was sitting on the ground, with my back against a tree, our leader, Sir Harvey Takemin, and Tom Sharpe, standing over me, and sponging my face with their handkerchiefs, which they had soaked in a neighbouring duck-pond.

“ ‘ Well, old fellow,’ said Tom, ‘ worth ten stiff ones yet ; but you’ve spoilt your beauty.’

“ ‘ All right now,’ said the baronet, ‘ here we are in Trottington Park ; I’ll get the mare caught, give you some lunch, and send you on to Bicester in my trap.’

“ In trying to thank him I lisped most wofully, and putting my hand to my mouth found I had knocked out four front teeth ; and, on further examination, had cut a regular canal out of my forehead, around which Tom had bound my



The Child and the Horse

neckerchief. Luckily no bones were broken ; the only further damage was the loss of my hat, which I supplied at the park, and one of my spurs, which was afterwards found and dug out of the pommel of my saddle.

“ I need not tell you that I could *eat* nothing. I took, by the advice of our kind but mischief-loving entertainer, a large glass of cold without, and got back to college as sore and miserable as any poor devil could be. I sneaked into bed, and would never have got up again, if my tutor had not insisted on seeing me the next morning.

“ I rose and went to his rooms, looking like ‘ a figure in plaster ’—only not so classical.

“ ‘ Take a *seat*, sir,’ said he. Now this was doubtless well meant—but human nature could not endure it.

“ ‘ All the rest is *leather*,’ as Dr. Pangloss says ; but if he had been in my place he would not have spoken so contemptuously of *leather*. We never know the value of a thing till we *lose* it—I respectfully begged to receive his remarks standing.

“ ‘ Mr. Hallum ! hem ! you were not at chapel yesterday, sir, either in the morning or evening—*mane noctuæ*—you were absent from all your college lectures, losing my entertaining and invaluable annotations on the several topics under discussion — and you did not dine in hall — these are your *negative* crimes. You were *positively* weak enough, to use a mild term for fool and ass enough, to strut about quad in a dress—borrowed too, I’m informed — forbidden by the laws of this college, and the statutes of the university. You will therefore translate all your lectures, confine yourself to hall, chapel, and college ; I shall cross your name on the buttery and kitchen books, and — *think yourself WELL OFF.*’

“ Fortunately for me it was discovered that I had been out in a gig, without leave, and my sentence was commuted to rustication for two terms — of course I destroyed the tutor’s letter, which conveyed the tidings of my disgrace to my father, and substituted a doctor’s certificate of ill health, recommending country air, and especially *horse exercise*.

“ Thus the old adage was verified in me— ‘ omnibus in malis aliquid boni inest ’—(which some translate, ‘ there’s always some *boneing*, *i.e.* thieving going on in those rascally omnibuses.) I escaped quizzing and Tom Sharpe ; came up again with a sound and firm seat, and not afraid to face any country.

“ So now give me one more cigar, and I’ll toddle off to my perch, ‘ to sleep, perhaps to dream,’ of Trottington Park.”

“ Broome,” said I, when he had done, “ I feel obliged to you for your story, and with your leave will adopt it in my next number.”

“ Why, as to adopt,” replied he ; “ if you mean by adopt—to call it your own, it’s a lie ; but if you choose to treat us to a paper of bird’s-eye, and three quarts of the best beer, you may swear it’s a child of your own, for all I care—you’re not the first man by some hundreds who has got credit, and profit too, from *adopting* another man’s notions and ideas ! Adopting children is not near so common nor profitable.”

“ Hand has the heditor will be ignorant hof

hit, you need not esitate," called out Dusterly, as he rose and made a hanticipatory happlica-tion to the bell "for orders"—not theatrical orders, for I paid 2s. 4½*d.* for them, whereas the others are free gratis for nothing.

When I had discussed my share of the beer and bird's-eye, I parted from my friends with my usual politeness and punctuality—for I always *tea* at six. As I bent my "homeward way," as Goldsmith says in "the Curfew," and conned over Broome's story in order to recollect it sufficiently to turn it into writing—a very difficult thing, let me tell you, for a young author of nigh seventy—I could not help congratulating the coroner of the university—for we collegians don't condescend to let county or city body-searchers sit upon us, but keep a private one for our own convenience—I say I could not help congratulating our man on being so seldom called upon to exercise the disagreeable duties of his honourable office. It really is wonderful so few accidents happen, considering the number of boys that come up from school, and fancy themselves men all at once, and though they

were never outside a horse in all their previous states of existence, go and give eight shillings to commit suicide on an Oxford hack, when they might effect their object, and have a cold bath too, for nothing, their corpses when “found drowned” being sent home to their anxious mothers without a mark upon them. I can only account for the miracle in one way, which is, that the livery-stable-keepers, hackmen, as we call them, are as clever, almost, as we scouts, and know their men at first sight — keeping horses to suit all sorts, just as they used, in Macheath’s time in the gaols, to keep fetters to fit all sizes of limbs and purses.

As to a scout, if he is possessed of any judgment and discrimination, *i. e. nous*, combined with practice, he can detect a green one the moment he sees him — *how*, I will explain in some future number :—a public schoolboy will sometimes cause a minute or two’s hesitation; but your private pupil at £300 per annum, and two glasses of wine after dinner—you can’t mistake *him!*—he invariably looks as if he had been brought up by two maiden aunts, encouraged to

keep tame rabbits, eat moist-sugared bread-and-butter, and indulge in such other little enjoyments which “need no foreign aid nor sympathy.” I’m not over fond of them.

CHAPTER III.

UNTIL I, Peter Priggins, became an author, and gave to the public those thoughts which I had previously been in the habit of keeping to myself, I confess I had not the remotest idea of the pains and penalties attendant on the *digito monstrari*; or of the propensity of my fellow-creatures to appropriate to themselves characters, for which neither nature nor art ever designed them.

I am tempted to make these observations in consequence of several observations that have been made to me — some rather rudely — since the Oxford public “knew I was out.” I shall merely give one incident to illustrate my point, lest I unwisely expose myself to the rebuke *ne quid nimis*.

One day, as I was proceeding up St. Giles’s in

order to take my favourite postprandial walk, round the parks and up to where — as they say of Hicks's Hall—the Diamond House “formerly stood,” *per se*, in all the dignity of loneliness — a spot now, as my friend Dusterly remarks, “kivered hover with hornamental abitations:” just before I got to St. John's I heard the steps of some one progressing rather rapidly in my rear, and on turning round to gratify an excusable curiosity and see who my pursuer was, I recognized Dr. Puffs of—— Coll., a rubicund reverend of long standing in the University, and a victim to rheumatism—an *alias* for gout, which he perseveringly insists on adopting, notwithstanding all the faculty are against him. As I turned round to pay my respects to him by removing my hat—an article of dress to which the idiosyncrasy of our race forbids us to resort, except in the streets — he dashed his cane to the ground with so loud and sudden a percussion as to cause me to retrograde a yard at least, and articulating as distinctly as the *sublimis anhelitus* caused by his unusual speed in pursuit of me would allow of, said —

"Priggins, I believe?"

I bowed assent, and there's something peculiarly fascinating and respectful in a scout's bow, implying a sense of humility, but not of the degradation of a domestic menial—a family footman—Teapots we call them.

"Peter Priggins?" resumed he, laying a stress on my prænomen.

I bowed again.

"Formerly scout, bedmaker, and common-room-man of St. Peter's?"

"Yes, sir; where I have often had the pleasure of doing the attentive, when you invited yourself to dine with any of our gentlemen."

"Silence, sirrah! Author, too, of the trash in the *N. M. M.*, which you are pleased to call your 'Life and Times?' as if a scout ought ever to call his life his own, or devote his time to any thing but his masters!"

As he uttered this with a volubility and rapidly-increasing redness of the face that positively alarmed me lest he should burst, he continued to advance, repeating the application of his crutch-headed cane upon the pavement so

that I was obliged in self-defence to assent and retreat at the same time, until I got the posts of St. John's terrace between us, through which I knew his rotundity could not obtrude without a great deal of time and dexterous manœuvring.

"How dare you, sirrah," he continued, "shew *me* up?"

"*You*, sir," replied I, in amazement; for I'll declare on the honour of a scout I had too great a respect for the University to drag so remarkable an individual before the public as a specimen of one of its members. "*You*, sir?"

"Yes, *me*, sir;" and in giving emphasis to his rejoinder he directed a sturdier blow than usual at the pavement, which unluckily lighted heavily on the newly-convalescent great toe of his suffering foot. Never shall I forget the very odd expression of his otherwise inexpressive features! a sort of mixture—pain and rage, a. a. 3iiij, with a sense of self-humiliation, and the certainty of a renewed fit of podagra, q s. The positive inability at getting at the injured member to rub it, owing to his obesity, probably prolonged his passion and the pain — not to mention the

grins of sundry *snobiculi*, who were passing to the national schools at the moment. As soon as he had recovered sufficiently to give utterance to his words, he recommenced—(My part of the dialogue being carried on by “nods and becks and wreathed smiles.”)

“*Me*, sir! yes, sir! Ain’t I a Bursar? Don’t I come in off a journey? Don’t I eat soup—drink port wine and egg-flip, and top up with brandy-and-water? Don’t I know a man named Smith or Smyth? and yet you deny having shewed me up in No. I.!”

From my knowledge of his habits, I could not deny his assertions as to the love of liquids, and felt but little reasonable doubt in my mind that he knew a man named Smith. I, therefore, merely suggested that every college in Oxford had a Bursar, (pursers they call them on board ship) and every Bursar might or might not, as chance or nature dictated, drink port, eat soup, top up with cogniac, and know a man named Smith; but it did not follow that any individual of them had sat for the portrait I drew of *our* Bursar in No. I.

However effective my words and manner might have been with any more reasonable and less irate person, with Dr. Puffs they produced precisely the same results on his temper as a few grains of arsenic do on being added to gunpowder ; he went off as quick again as before, and fired away with such increased velocity that I could not distinctly hear his sentences, but had a strong suspicion that his style was bordering on the naughty and uncivil, and am firmly persuaded his last words were, "D—d old twaddle !"

I merely mention this to shew how difficult it is to steer clear of the charge of personality, unless you treat of matters and men indubitably antediluvian.

I really regret to add that Dr. Puffs dined on some delicious apoplectic dishes that day at some other man's expense, and (from the quantity or quality of the viands, and the excitement inimical to digestion which his interview with me, his traducer, as he wrongly thought me, had unfortunately caused) was obliged to be conveyed home in a fly, serious fears being entertained that he had the gout in his stomach, until

the physician had ascertained by inquiry that from the mass of solids and fluids stowed away there, it could not possibly be, because there was not *room* for it.

Dr. Puff's rudeness upset me, and as I knew it was useless to pursue my intended walk with a view of ridding myself of my annoyed feelings, I adopted the advice which all doctors in difficult cases invariably give, and tried change of scene. I slipped quietly across Broad Street, down the Turl, Blue Boar Lane, and by the back of the Peckwater, through Merton Groves, into Christchurch Meadow, where I amused myself by observing the antics of the younger branches of our profession, who, in "the Long" (*subaudi*, vacation) are, like their masters, at leisure, and indisposed for any thing but pleasure as long as their accumulated wages last out.

I must confess that, strong as my prejudices are in favour of Oxford men in any athletic sports, especially rowing, I have seen a crew of College servants go it nearly as well, and look nearly as gentlemanly as their masters, in an eight or four oar—especially as they make it a rule

to keep their masters' Jerseys and pea-jackets aired, by giving them due daily exposure to the sun and wind, on their own persons ; their powers of imitation, too, might really impose upon any innkeeper, below the town of Abingdon, so far as to induce him to imagine them gentlemen in disguise, if they did not *over* do it, and would but keep their mouths shut, except for the purpose of imbibing their beer and inhaling their tobacco.

In my younger days, things on the water were different to what they are now ; Godstow and Medley up-stream were resorted to, and racing was seldom or ever heard of until Medley was done away with as a place of refreshment, and the boats transferred to the river below Oxford : then they began to increase in number, and improve in build. The Etonians and Westminster stimulated the Davises and Bossoms to emulate the fame and charges of Serle, Rawlinson, and other eminent London manufacturers ; and poor Stephen undertook the office of private nautical, or rather fresh-aquatic or cymbatic tutor, much to the undergraduate's advantage and his own.

“Going down with Stephen” meant work was intended; and when he was in condition and good wind, his *sprints* were awful and killing to those whose stamina was at all weak.

A good boat-race is certainly a splendid sight, especially when conducted in the fair, manly, and honourable way in which the Oxford matches are; no base thoughts of winning a cup, value fifty guineas, intervening; but all for sheer honour and the pride of seeing the College colours at the top of the flag-staff of the barge: a pride in which we servants share as fully as our masters, and when victorious we offer our libations to old Father Thames in wholesome ale — at their expense, as freely and as zealously as they do, under the more classic name of Governor Isis, in claret and champagne.

Boating is an amusement, the cheapest and most innocent of any in Oxford; and I hope the time will never come when the tea-and-tract-men get such an ascendancy as to talk even of putting it down. As long as any of us of the old school live, we shall oppose it — I mean our masters, not ourselves; but these are queer

times, and much of what was formerly considered morality is now called vicious, and deprecated accordingly. The time may come when the boats will be sold to buy books of science for the natives of Timbuctoo, and other outlandish places, the profits of which will go to those nice men the missionaries, and the oars be converted into staves to arm the men of the new rural police force — *μη γενοιτο*, says Peter Priggins !

With regard to the Henley regatta, I cannot say I quite like the idea of our young men letting themselves down to the level of the crews of those *monstra natantia*, the guards, Leanders, and others, who row for hire, *i. e.* work to *win* — besides I have a horror of any amusement that opens the way to gaming or betting ; and many a man, to make himself appear *fast*, will hazard a wager with one of those knowing individuals above alluded to, the payment of which — for he's sure to lose — may cripple him for two or three terms ; and although I like a lark as well as any man, and hate a humbug as I do old Nick, I am a bit of a stickler for college discipline — it keeps us respectable in the eyes of an en-

vious world—who would crush us if they could—but they can't. The idea of our men entering themselves, like race-horses, to run for a cup, for the amusement of all the landlords, louts, and labourers of a little cockneyfied neighbourhood like Henley, and the advantage of the licensed victuallers, is very annoying and degrading—it smells too strong of profit. I always fancy the hotel-keepers doing a sort of rule of three sum to themselves when they think of it; as, “If two Oxford men come here and spend £5, what will four hundred spend?” Not to mention getting rid of the stale beer and flat bottled porter to the cads and coachmen who form their tail. Whenever Cambridge challenges us to row them at Henley, well and good; we will go in and beat them—if we can; and if they like the winners to be entertained with a good supper afterwards, well and good; but no medals — no cups — no purses — say I, for the honour and glory of Oxford.

Such a match as that to which I have just consented took place about nine or ten years since, and I've got a letter all about it, which I

here publish. One of my masters gave it to me ;
it was written by a friend of his, who was one
of a party at the

HENLEY BOAT-RACE,
BETWEEN
OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

It is directed to

“ Robert Rural, Esq.

“ Rustic Grange,

“ Rutlandshire.

“ Dear Bob,

“ I am very seedy, and rather stiff ; nevertheless I cannot resist the inclination to try to relieve the *ennui* under which you must be labouring in the country. The idea of being boxed up with your old governess at the Grange !—doing penance on barley-water and boiled chicken —no beer, no wine, no nothing — in submission to the orders of your medical is rather a nuisance I calculate ; but it’s all your own fault, you will be so devilish fast there’s no stopping you, until you run your head against some wall or other, and get pulled up all of a heap. Just as if you could not have kept quiet for one week, and

pulled in our boat, instead of larking off to Witney after Poll Stich, the little ugly milliner's girl, and depriving us of the best No. 7 that ever turned oar in ro'llock, thereby losing your laurel crown, (though one of *parsley* would be more congenial now with your chicken) for, to ease your doubts at once, Oxford won by a hundred yards at least; but I must give you an account of the whole thing, it was *res non parva* I can tell you.

“ We found no little difficulty in getting a man to supply your place, but at last obtained a Jesus man, full of bone and beer; which last substance we succeeded in abstracting by a severe course of sudorifics and salts, under the advice and inspection of Stephen Davis, who got him into wind, by making him pull behind him, in a two-oar, down to Iffley and back, every other hour every day, as soon as he considered him medicinally *safe* for a start; giving him two sour plums, and a glass of acid Chablis between the heats, to keep his pluck up. He pulls stronger than you, old fellow, and that's saying a good deal for him; but, as Stephen says, ‘ rolls

about in the boat like a barrel of beer in Squashy and Washy's dray ;'—that will soon be rectified.

“ The crew started two days before the race, and pulled gently down to Henley, merely trying a spirt now and then to prove their wind, when they came to a fine reach, and arrived at the Hart in splendid condition — their hands as hard as horn, and without a blister, owing to Stephen's training and superior beeswax. Not an ounce of spare flesh among them, even in the Welshman ; but skin clear, and well strained over the starting muscles, with eyes as ‘ bright as bricks,’ as Lord Nincompoop very ably remarked ; he's always great at a simile. Stephen ordered the beefsteaks, and presided over the cooking of them, to ensure their being properly *not* cooked ; that is, merely just shown the fire to produce sufficient perfume and outside colouring to convince the consumers they were not performing an act of cannibalism. To wash down this *morçeau* each man was allowed half a pint of porter, and four glasses of port wine, and then Stephen undertook ‘ the character of chambermaid for that night only,’ and saw every man

safe in bed ; an example he followed himself, after putting on his usual nightcap — fourteen glasses of cold without, and twenty-eight cigars —judiciously observing as he bit one end off the last, and missed the candle with the other, in endeavouring to light it, ‘ I’m not a going to pull nor steer, and it’s very hard ‘if I can’t have a little rational recreation !’

“ It was an understood thing throughout the university that any man who chose might go to Henley, provided he asked leave of the Dean of his college, was back before twelve o’clock, and did not go in a tandem, which was very rigidly and very properly forbidden. Our Dean, you know, is a regular trump, and though he keeps his teams to their work — never double thongs them unnecessarily, and is always ready to grant all reasonable indulgences. Upon the present occasion, he showed his usual judgment and kindness, by bargaining with Costar and the other proprietors, for two coaches to carry all the men who wished to go to Henley and back at a certain moderate sum ; thereby ensuring comfort and economy too. I got leave

to go in Kickum's trap, with three other men — Dick Downe, who was to be waggoner, and wanted to use the long reins ; but the Dean would not hear of it, though Dick brought up fifteen of his most intimate friends — presiding geniuses of the 'Tivy,' 'Tally-ho,' and other crack coaches, to certify to his proficiency in handling the ribbons ; and could have produced their wives and families to strengthen his case, if requisite, for Dick is too fond of all connected with coaching to limit his attentions to the male branches of the profession. It was no go — so we had a pair, and a pair of good ones—Woodpecker, that kicked Sam Strapper's leg in two, and old Peter that bit a piece out of Will Wisp's breeches.

“ Our two friends, who rode behind, were Solomon, the son of Sir Solomon Stingo, the great London porter brewer, who is generally known by the *sobriquet* of the Knight of Malta, and Tim Tripes, a fresh importation from Charterhouse ; and, of course, a good judge of London entire.

“ Now, I confess to a little malice in our mo-

tives for picking out these two men, as we made sure of a good rise or two out of them during the day. Solomon is a great ass, very rich and very stingy ; but he consented to pay pikes all the way, provided he was allowed to play a tune on a tin trumpet in every village we passed through, and to announce our approach to the various pikemen. He can't bear the slightest allusion to malt in any shape—small-beer, table-ale, XX, or stout, and would not be *seen* with a pewter in his hand, to get his governor a baronetcy. I knew from Tripes's talents in that line he would insist on pulling up at every public on the road to 'wash the dust out of his mouth,' and thereby drive the brewer's boy into hysterics or convulsions. Rise No. 1.

" You don't know Solomon, so I'll just give you an idea of him. Did you ever see a troop of yeomanry practising what is called *post* exercise ; that is, learning to cut off human heads by chopping with their swords at a lump of wood like a barber's block stuck on a barber's pole ? because that same pole with the block on it will give you no bad notion of Solomon's head

and neck — shoulders he has none ; but to compensate for the deficiency of his upper build, he displays what the sailors call a remarkable breadth of beam amidships, and his legs appear as if he had obtained a grace of the house, or a dispensation from the vice-chancellor to wear the calf downwards. His face seems as if it had been badly cut out of a frosted savoy, and thatched with red-wheat straw. He has ferret-eyes, and a mouth evidently designed to dispose of asparagus by the bundle. His dress is in the worst possible *outré* taste of a Regent Street Sunday buck, with gold pins, rings, and chains, as ostentatiously displayed on all parts of his person as if he were training for bagman to a Brummagem jeweller. To crown all, on his nasty soapy red hair he wears a white beaver tastily turned up with green eaves. He is no beauty you'll allow.

“ Tim Tripes, you know, as the best bow-oar in our boat—a little thickset fellow, with splendid shoulders and deltoids well developed, full of pluck and science — not Aristotle's but Mr. Jackson's running a little too much to middle

from constitutional unwillingness to let go a quart of porter before he has seen the bottom of it; a trick acquired from tibbling-out down the lane, *i. e.*, Charterhouse Lane, to the Red Cow; the landlord of which noted public, generally a retired fighting-man, looked with sovereign contempt on every man and boy who ‘couldn’t swallow a kevart hoff at vonce.’

“As I knew the little town of Henley would be full to overflowing, I took the precaution of writing to an old college friend to secure stables or stalls for the prads. In reply he told me he had succeeded in doing so, at the Bell or the Bull, but from the horrid nature of his scrawl, resembling Egyptian hieroglyphics, Sanscrit, or Arabic characters, I could not tell which, so I left it to chance, or Providence—which some of our senators consider the same thing.

“Just before we set off, I saw Solomon’s tiger busily employed in wiping the moisture off his forehead (with the wash-leather, intended for polishing his master’s wine-glasses), caused, it appeared, from over-exertion in trying to cram a large hamper under the trap, which Solomon

kindly informed us, with as knowing a look as his ferrety eyes could convey, contained six bottles of gooseberry champagne, two of British brandy, and a large rook-pie, with bottled porter to match ; ‘ for you know,’ said he, ‘ they impose dreadful at inns, at public times, and we can slip out the back way, sit down in a field, and have a good dinner cheap, six bottles of sham champagne — it’s very good though — twelve shillings ;— two of brandy— best British — nine ;— that’s a guinea.’ (Making use of his fingers for ready reckoners.) ‘ The rooks I shot at Nuneham a week ago, and got Mother Priggins to put a cover over them, in exchange for an old waistcoat—so that don’t count. My governor stands porter — we can beg a bit of salt, and buy a twopenny buster at a baker’s-shop. Now, if we had dined at the inn, we should have had to pay a guinea apiece, instead of the same sum between four of us — for I don’t mean to stand treat except for the crow-tart and porter.’

“ We did not oppose the stingy dog’s whim then, but got all our rattletraps into the pheaton, as Kickum’s ostler (not to vary from his kind)

called it, and started as soon as Woodpecker and old Peter had done kicking and biting. They went off screwy at first, being groggy from overfast work ; but as Kickum predicted, ‘as soon as they got warm, and the *jint ile* began to act,’ away they went, about twelve miles an hour, thus illustrating Virgil’s ‘*vires acquirit eundo.*’ We got along well till we came to the Harcourt Arms, at Nuneham. Solomon pulled out his tin trumpet, and had just commenced toot-toot-tooing, to the evident risk of blowing his front teeth out, when Tripes bawled out, ‘Wo-ho !’—a sound Woodpecker and old Peter willingly obeyed, in spite of Dick’s persuasions lashingly applied. ‘I say, old fellows, you don’t think I am going to pass the best glass of ale on the road? Hillo! Mother Bung! bring out four quarts of the best in the pewters! What’s one apiece to begin with?’ I turned round to get a glimpse of Solomon’s face—he was looking daggers at Tripes, and holding the tin trumpet up in the air, like Mr. Harper preparing for a flourish, indicating a hostile descent on the head of his enemy—but Tim doubled his palm, which

was ready extended for the malt, and merely observed, '*If you do*,' when the arm dropped listlessly by his side, and 'the music' into the road, where it performed a peculiar description of pirouette for two minutes in the dust to Solomon's horror—as he had to give a quart of beer to the blacksmith's man for wiping it with his dirty apron.

" 'Here's to you, Mr. Musician,' cried Tripes ; 'come, sink your family-failing for once, and taste the tap—won't you? — Then I'll do it for you.' The hand and head went gradually and beautifully back together, until the initials of Mary Thompson were visible at the bottom of the cup, and he found breath to say, 'All right, Dick ! the gentleman with red hair will pay you as we come back, Mother Bung, by ! by !'

" Solomon swore it was a shame, and said he'd be blowed if he would—and sulked and grumbled to Dorchester, where his conceit of his musical abilities got the better of his temper, and he blew his tin vociferously, till the White Hart appeared in view, when Tripes again cried 'Wo-ho ! capital porter, here. Landlord ! four pints

best stout.' It was only three miles from our last pull up, so we positively declined. But Tripes insisted on *his* allowance, taking especial care, in handing it into the trap, to drop a tea-cupful over Solomon's new white kerseymeres, and drank it leisurely, to enjoy, with one eye, the spiteful look of vindictiveness depicted on his victim's face, as he carefully removed the 'stain upon his honour' with a refulgent red pocket-handkerchief, till Tripes cried out, 'All right, the gentleman in beery breeches will pay as we come back.'

"About a mile further is a little place called Shillingford, with two road-side houses just opposite to each other, where Tripes wanted to stop again to see whether a proper sense of competition had stimulated the respective landlords to brew something a little better than common, but his usual 'Wo-ho!' would not have succeeded, for Dick was awake to his plans by this time, and was cutting into Woodpecker and old Peter unmercifully, had not the water-troughs on either side of the road proved as tempting to the nags as the words 'real home brewed'

did to Tripes. There we were ! Woodpecker, who was on the near side, making for the left-hand trough, and old Peter doggedly determined to reach the other on the right—each horse being ably assisted in his struggles by the ostler and landlord of the house for which he was showing so decided a preference. When the landladies endeavoured to seduce the gentlemen on their sides, Dick dropped his whip in despair, singing ‘ How happy could I be with either ! ’ and the ‘ war of words ’ between the adherents of the *centre gauche* and the *centre droite* was at length allayed by Tripes calling out ‘ A plague on both your houses—Mrs. left-hand house ! bring two quarts of *your* best ! Mrs. right-hand ditto ! ditto !—Left-hand ostler !—right-hand ditto !—the gentleman in the harmonic line will give you sixpence apiece to bring each of those horses a pot of beer, and if they won’t drink it, you can do it for them, and favour them with a bucket of water in exchange.’ Solomon’s demurrer was useless—we all swore we had no money, so he paid for all, taking his change to the uttermost farthing, and grumbling ‘ Here’s a pretty go—I’m to stand Sam all day ! ’

“ We got off again as quickly as we could, for fear we should be involved in a discussion between Tripes and the opposition landlords, as to which was the best brewer ; a question he would not have ventured to decide without critically investigating the contents of every barrel in their cellars. However, he seemed willing to move on, as he knew that Benson was only a mile and a half further, and that we meant to stop and feed ourselves and the prads at the White Hart.

“ As ill-luck would have it, just as we turned into the gateway of that inn in good style, Solomon melodiously saluting the house with evident self-satisfaction, and anticipating the praises of ‘ the boys,’ the Alert was standing there, with the horses put to, and Black Will in the act of mounting the box with the reins and whip in his off-hand. Whether his team had no ‘ music in their souls,’ or were uxorious, and had a horror of horns, I can’t say ; but they all four began dancing out of tune and the yard, before Will had gained the box, whence he ‘ came down with a run,’ as the Jack tars say, and was

dragged some little distance by the reins before the horses could be stopped.

“ Now those who know the ‘ *Black Prince*,’ as Mr. Bowers was called when he worked on that coach (though one wag was wicked enough to suggest that the title was acquired from his having been seen at a battle of *A-gin-court*), must be well aware that his excessive politeness would be rather tried by so unpleasant an ejection from ‘ his seat.’ He rose gracefully — gave the reins and whip to the horsekeeper — made signs to boots to rub him down, and then walked deliberately up to poor Solomon, who had been viewing these proceedings with feelings verging on insanity, and touching his hat with his usual urbanity, and putting his heavy foot on the horn, and crushing it flat, said, ‘ You Spooney ! — next time you wants to *practise* on that there bugle, perch yourself somewhere or other, where there ain’t no horses nor hasses to hear you.’ Then turning round to Dick, who was looking deprecatingly, and shaking him by the hand much more affectionately than his own father would or could have done, he whispered

loudly enough for the whole assembly to hear, ‘ Dick ! I thought as how you was too far advanced to put such an hass as that into a guard’s place !—Why, his werry looks ’ud ruin the best consarn on the road.’ Dick made an humble apology, and an offer of a libation, which Will accepted, in the shape of two glasses of cold brandy-and-water, concentrated into one, and then mounted his box and drove off for Henley, with his fourteen outside and six in—the super-numeraries being *shouldered*, ‘ in course !’

“ Solomon was too deeply engaged in trying (fortunately without success—tin being at a premium in Benson) to procure a new musical instrument, to join us in a quiet kidney and a glass of Curaçoa, though we made him pay, under the former successful plea of having no tin like himself, and a threat of Shrub’s, suggested by ourselves, that he would detain him, and have him up before a beak, if he did not. Dick was so anxious to overtake the Alert, and beat his dark friend into Henley, that poor Woodpecker and old Peter were forced to kick and bite in evident disgust at being put-to

before they had properly digested their provender.

“ Talking of provender, I must tell you a story : A juvenile commercial, out on his first journey, arrived at the inn to which he had been recommended by his predecessor, and, to come it double strong, disdained to use the language of other men, telling the ostler to ‘ provender his quadruped while he discussed his chop.’

“ Mr. Rub’emdown, not knowing the precise interpretation of this oracular order, mentioned it to an old traveller in the Manchester line, who wickedly explained it to mean, ‘ crop his mane and ears close, and cut his tail down to a short dock,’ which was accordingly done, much to the ostler’s satisfaction, under the full anticipation of a double fee for despatch.

“ When the gentleman ordered his gig, and having paid his score was about to mount, he swore in a most indecent manner that ‘ that ’orse was not his’n, but another man’s ! ’ nor would he be convinced to the contrary until Rub’emdown fetched the stray attributes, and replaced them as well as he could, making his

identity undeniable. I need not say, he never showed at the same house again.

“ We got over the next five miles without a check, although it is all against collar. Dick jockeyed Tripes 'at Nettlebed, by jerking his elbow violently against his mouth, just as we got to the Red Lion, thereby preventing the usual ‘Wo-ho!’ and by tipping Woodpecker and Peter a ‘short Tommy,’ *i. e.*, sticking an enormous large shirt-pin, in the shape of a coach-pole and splinter-bars, into their quarters, which engaged their attention too much to allow them to see the water-trough by the road-side, we got close up to the Alert just at the commencement of the fair-mile, where Dick began to make play to pass Will. The old stager was too deep for him, and commenced the jostling system, which so amazed our charioteer, that seeing what he conceived a good opening to turn out on the turf, and give Will the go-by, he tried it on, and upset us very easily, but ludicrously, into a *ci-devant* gravel-pit, to the great amusement of every one but ourselves. However, the only harm done was from a violent kick of Woodpecker's, judiciously admi-

nistered on Solomon's centre of gravity, and the ingratitude of old Peter, who bit a piece out of Tripe's coat-tail, as he was kindly endeavouring to set him on his legs again. Amidst the shouts of the clods, 'we up and after them,' getting into the town just as Will had touched his hat and his fees.

"We pulled up at the Bell, and found my friend had got us a capital two-stalled stable, in which we saw our nags comfortably locked up with full racks and mangers, and toddled off to the Hart to see how the crews looked, and hear the opinions as to the result. We ordered dinner at five, as the race was to take place at eight, without saying a word to Solomon, and on our return from viewing the natives and the boats, found a nice dish of stewed eels, fried perch, framed with gudgeons, cold lamb and salad, and roasted pigeons, with lots of Reading asparagus upon the table. Solomon was missing; and just as we had finished our fish, and the 'premier pop' of Champagne was heard, he made his appearance, to tell us 'he had fixed on a nice quiet corner for the crow-tart and gooseberry,'

but bolted again when he saw we were otherwise engaged, looking exasperated at our extravagance, and buttoning up both his trousers' pockets, as a hint we were to pay for ourselves this time.

“But to the race itself. About seven o'clock the rival crews pulled gently down to the starting-place, about two miles below Henley bridge, distinguished by their colours. Oxford sported true blue; Cambridge, pink; and every thing was arranged by the umpires in a quiet, gentlemanly way, without any wrangling. There was a toss for choice of sides, which was won by the Cambridge men; and of course they chose the bank on their bows, as the river forms a rather sharp curve to the left, between the locks and the town. There was to be no fouling, and the victory was to belong to the party who passed first under the bridge.

“Just before the start every inch of ground that could command a view of the river on either side was occupied by gazers of all sorts and sizes—lords and ladies, Jans and Jinnies, saints and sinners, cockneys and country bumpkins—it was

an universal holiday in that part of the world ; and Miss Martineau might have applied her preventive check, without any fear of “restraining the population” upon this occasion.

“ The Oxford boat belonged to Baliol Coll., built by Davis and King ; the Cambridge was a bran-new turn out of Serle’s, and one of the neatest I ever saw : though it struck me, when I examined her on shore as she was being greased, that she was too crank for the crew that were to pull in her—all men of weight and inches ; perhaps two finer crews were never seen ; but our men were rather the longer and lighter in their *corpuscula* of the two.

“ At eight o’clock precisely, the order was given for ‘ Up with your oars ; ’ and in two minutes, at the word ‘ Off,’ they dropped them in beautifully—as one man ; but a cry of ‘ False start,’ owing to some little dispute about the exact distance from blade to blade, caused them to backwater, and prepare again. In five minutes the referees made all right, and ‘ Off she goes,’ was again cried. Away they went ! and before they got three hundred yards, my expe-

rienced eye could see that my conjecture about the London boat was quite correct. She dipped in the bows every stroke, as if they were going to pull her under water, and rocked fearfully until they got into good time. The short stroke too, with the back quite straight, and the arms doing all the work, would not do on *smooth* water, compared with the long pull *through* the water, and quick feather *out* of it, of the Oxford men, who gained rapidly upon, and soon passed their rivals, taking the inside place. I was close upon them both, and could hear the steady cry of the steersman, ‘Go it, my blues—beautifully pulled!—three minutes more, and your work’s done—they lose ground (water he meant) every moment—steady!—no hurry—keep the old stroke!—backs down on the thwarts,’ from the Oxford boat; and the ‘By George, we’re beaten!—quicken your stroke—don’t you go back so, you No. 3—pull for Heaven’s sake!’ of the Cambridge.

“I pulled up about a quarter of a mile from the bridge, being quite satisfied how it was going, and thoroughly blown from the speed and

nature of my exertions ; for no one, who has not tried it, knows what 'running up' with an eight-oar means. The snobs were wofully taken to that day, being shoved, unreservedly, some into the river, others into ditches by the more *au fait* Oxonians.

“ A tremendous shout, and the striking up of the church bells, proclaimed the victory was won by the Oxford men, with one hundred yards to spare !!! I jumped into a punt with poor Stephen, and, by dint of his superior generalship, got on the opposite bank in time to see our crew land ; and the best proof of their excellent condition was, that not one man was so distressed as to be obliged to be helped out of the boat. Our opponents came in rather more distressed, but still not much the matter. Such a shouting was still going on, that it was impossible to hear anything said, until Stephen thundered out, ‘ Now, my true blues ! as much porter as you like ! ’ And I heard one of the victors say, as he set an emptied quart-cup on the table at Mrs. Dixon’s, ‘ If nectar did not mean London porter, he did not know what did.’

“ You, who have been so often at such scenes on the banks of Isis, will easily imagine the whole affair ; nor will you require me to describe the supper given by the vanquished to the conquerors — the compliments mutually given and received—the toasts drank — and last, though by no means *least*, the quantity and quality of liquids absorbed. More unflinching candidates for the favour of father Bacchus never drained Cyathi. Nor were the muses neglected — ‘ Nine times nine ’ was the cry of the night ! I shall finish my letter by recording the final adventures of our *partie carrée*.

“ As for myself, I had an invitation to take coffee, at the house of my friend whom I have mentioned before as the procurer of our nag’s temporary domicil s, and being a little bit of a vocalist, passed two or three pleasant hours standing over a pianoforte and a very fine girl, to whom I was well contented to sing second. However, when ten o’clock arrived, I tore myself away from my fair chantress, or enchantress, whichever you please to call her, in order to get Dick, Tripes, and Solomon ready to start — for

we had promised the Dean not to be later than twelve o'clock. This, however, I found to be no easy matter, and returned to my friend's house after half an hour's vain search, to consult him on the best means of getting out of my difficulties. One of the parties relieved me speedily, if not pleasantly. Just fancy my horror on hearing a scuffling sort of noise at the door of the drawing-room, which was filled with company, and, seeing my friend Tripes very bosky, holding on by the doorpost on either side, and in a husky hiccupping tone requesting to be informed 'if our drag was at the Bell or the Bull? — the Bull or the Bell?' adding, for the information of the ladies, that 'he'd tried every tap in the town, and never tasted such very bad beer in all his life.' I ran at him vicious, and carried him *vi et armis*, with my friend's assistance, in spite of his spiteful kicks and bites, into the stable-yard, where we laid him on a truss of straw, and sponged his head with cold pump-water, which soon had the desired effect. On his recovery he laid it all to the beer being brewer's trash, and requested to taste my friend's

private tap, assuring him half a pint would be the making of him. My expostulations were useless ; and, while my host was gone to give the necessary, or rather unnecessary orders, he entertained me with a discussion on the merits of a large two-handed pump, down Charterhouse, and its wonderful efficacy in remedying the effects of Red Cow—‘ pumps up ten gallons a minute, and as cold as ice — hiccup ! — never knew it fail !’

“ I got him safe to the Bell at last, and locked him in with Woodpecker and old Peter, giving the ostler strict charge not to supply him with any liquids but water. Then I proceeded on another voyage of discovery, and arrived at the White Hart just in time to see Will start with about half his cargo. With his usual judgment he had stowed the soberest men outside ; the very drunken ones, seven in number, were compressed inside with the doors screwed up to prevent their opening them, and tumbling out on the road, and the windows nailed down for fear they should cut themselves with the glasses. No objection was made to these arrangements, for

none of the seven could articulate. When, however, he proceeded to strap three or four *half* bosky men to the roof of the coach, so firm and strong a resistance was made, that he found it necessary to borrow three of Bowling's kicking-straps, and a pair of darbies (*i. e.*, handcuffs) of the constable, before his endeavours were crowned with success. I inquired if he had seen Dick lately, and I heard with joy that he was then in the bar smoking a pipe with the coachman and guard of the Stroud mail *down*. He was sober as yet, as he had been drinking tea with the coachman's wife in his absence—coffee with the guard's sister, and was going to play at cribbage or dominoes with another jehu's daughter, but left her in disgust when he discovered that her governor only *druv a pair*.

“I assisted him in finishing his glass of *twist*, which is coach-Latin for half gin and half brandy-and-water, and carried him off rather sulky, to assist in the search for Solomon. All our endeavours, for a time, were fruitless; he had not been seen since he left the yard with the hamper under his arm by any one. It struck

me all of a sudden, that, having intimated an intention of dining economically *al fresco*, he had made for the fields in the rear of the house, and, as it was a brilliant moonlight night, we explored in that direction with success; for, being attracted by faint hip! hurrahs! uttered in 'childish trebles,' we directed our steps towards them, and discovered two little chimney-sweepers and a charity schoolboy, engaging themselves on the crow-tart and gooseberry wine of poor Solomon, who was lying dead drunk on his back under the bushes, lovingly embracing a fly-driver, quite as drunk as himself.

"Dick, in spite of Mr. Martin's act, pulled him by the legs out of the bushes, with a stoical disregard of the lacerations caused by the thorns, and, so strong was the sudden attachment formed between the two votaries of Bacchus, that in dragging Solomon out, he drew the fly-man with him.

"I afterwards learned that Solomon, finding the hamper rather heavy and inconvenient to carry, had engaged the assistance of the fly-

man, who was idling about the yard, to carry it for him to his 'quiet corner,' under the promise of a bottle of porter as a reward. The flavour of the porter pleased his palate so well, that he returned after an hour's time, to offer his services in carrying the hamper back, in hopes of obtaining a second edition. To his great delight he found Solomon so far gone from original sobriety, and in so generous a humour, that he unhesitatingly accepted his invitation to partake of the remainder of the crow-tart and a bottle of gooseberry. Though the rooks were not much the better for having been killed a week, and the steak on which they rested was very tough, they contrived between them to demolish nearly all of the pie and the porter; the wine, however, took a very sudden and powerful effect upon them, which they endeavoured to remedy by imbibing nearly all the British brandy. The result was, both were so beastly drunk that they fell asleep in each other's arms. The little chummies and the charity-boy found them by accident, as they were cutting round the town the back way to see the fireworks — being supposed

by their fond parents to be safe in bed — and thought it a pity that two such intemperate beings should be exposed to further temptation if they chanced to recover ; so they charitably resolved to remove the *irritamenta malorum* by finishing the little that was left. When we came up they were each engaged in guggling a bottle of gooseberry, to ‘ the health of the gen’l’-man as did n’t know how to stop when he’d had enough.’

“ We left them to take care of the hamper and the fly-man (who had to drive the Mayor of Maidenhead, his wife, and nine little aspirants for the mace to their home after the fireworks, which had just commenced, were over) and carried Solomon into the stable to Tripes, who was now nearly sober, and promised to behave well for the rest of the night, if we would let him out.

“ What was to be done ? it was folly to think of starting with Solomon in such a condition ; so we agreed to let Tripes physic him, and stay one hour to see the effect of the dose, the fireworks, and the Stroud mail start. Tripes ran

into the Bell in a state of ecstasy, and returned with a jug of hot water, into which he was industriously stirring the contents of two mustard-pots; this he managed in a most scientific way, to administer as a drench to poor Solomon after he had removed his stock and unbuttoned his shirt collar: we then set him up in a corner and left him.

“The fireworks were very fine, but the night was finer and spoiled their effect; it was too light for lights, so we humoured Dick and ran to see the mail start. We were just in time—for there were about twenty Oxford men harnessed to it by ropes and all sorts of contrivances, dragging it off at about ten miles an hour—to the horror of Dick’s friend the coachman, the insides and outs, and the guard who had to run with the bags in one hand and the pair of wheelers in the other, nearly a mile and a half before he could catch them.

“Tripes, who was gazing maliciously at the large image fixed over the inn-door, intended to represent a white hart (a sketch from nature, having golden hoofs, red eyes, nose, and ears,



Scene under Mr. Martin's

enormous green antlers, and no tail) suggested to about forty or fifty surrounding undergraduates, that it was positively cruel to keep so noble an animal in a situation where he could get nothing to eat or drink, and proposed with their assistance to remove him to a more natural lay in Mr. Maitland's park. This act of disinterested benevolence was speedily effected by means of a cart-rope, amidst the cheers of a sympathizing mob of snobs, and the useless expostulations of the landlord.

“An energetic *special*, in his zeal for the maintenance of order, collared Tripes, who hates an authority at all times, and was not likely to submit quietly to a great overgrown baker, because he had a constable's staff in his hand, so he replied to his threat of ‘pulling him up before the beaks,’ by hitting him exceedingly hard in the wind, and calling out for ‘a ring!’ which was quickly formed, and the special carried home in less than five minutes after, with his face smashed to a pulp, and his morlares rendered unfit for mastication.

“We took Stephen Davis's advice, and ‘cut

our lucky' at once. The dose had fortunately operated successfully on Solomon, who was just able to sit up in the trap when properly tied in with a halter; so we paid our bill, and told Dick 'to slack his hand' all the way to Benson, where we meant to sup. We arrived there about half-past twelve, and found them just shutting up. The cook was standing in the kitchen flattering himself his work was over for the night, and about to wash down the fatigues of a hard day with a glass of warm brandy-and-water, when Dick rushed in, seized the goblet, and swallowed its contents, before the puzzled *chef de cuisine* could stretch out his greasy fist to prevent him. He was so disgusted at the uncereemonious usage he had met with, that he rudely declined broiling any ham for us, until Tripes knocked him down with the flat side of a 'best York,' weighing two or three and twenty pounds, seized his large knife, and proceeded to act as his deputy at the gridiron. This brought him to his senses and the fire. His ingenuity was displayed to our satisfaction, and his injured honour repaired by an unlimited order for

brandy-and-water for himself and the waiter. When both these worthies were disposed of under the dresser, we yielded to the fascinating request of the barmaid and Mrs. Shrub, 'to let them have a *little* sleep,' and set off home about four in the morning.

"On the road, we, that is, Dick and I, who were neither of us much amiss, were engaged in forming our plans for apologizing satisfactorily to the Dean. On one point we fully agreed : to lay all the blame on poor Solomon, who was fast asleep, lashed to the back of the trap and Tripes's arm : he, Tripes, being rather dozy, and afraid of falling out if he indulged in a nap without such due precautions.

"We got to college about five o'clock, and found the gates just opened, hurried Solomon to bed, undressing and locking him safe in his rooms ; we then took his splash new coat, and the rest of his dress, and walked to the nearest meadow, where we immersed them in a green muddy ditch, and then trailed them along the dusty road ; giving them a friendly stamping with our dirty boots now and then, by way of

variety, and finally strewed them about his rooms in drunken disorder. We then obtained a commons of new bread from another man's rooms, and, extracting a piece of crumb about the size of a cricket-ball, entered Solomon's bedroom, and without his being at all conscious of the fact, tied it firmly on his right cheek with a white pocket-handkerchief to represent a swelled face ; and by a judicious commixture of red and black ink, applied to his right optic, succeeded in making him a very effective black eye.

“ All these arrangements being completed, I ran across quad to the Dean's rooms. He was up and dressing for chapel. I put on a very long face, and told him a very piteous tale of the trouble Solomon had given us all the day, and of his obstinate determination to have his share of driving, though unqualified for the art ; the result of which was, that he had upset himself into a gravel-pit, after we had fortunately jumped out to avoid the danger which we saw was otherwise inevitable.

“ ‘ Is he hurt ?’

“ ‘ A little, sir, but we have put him to bed,

and he is now asleep; will you look at him, and say if we can do any thing more for him?"

"‘Certainly.’ He returned with me, and found every thing as I had said—being satisfied from the horrid object he saw in bed, and the state of the ‘clothing department,’ that ‘we must have experienced a great deal of annoyance from a man who gave way to such a disgusting vice as intoxication.’

"So ended our day at Henley, old fellow, and so ends the letter of

"Yours, as ever,

"WILLIAM WYDEAWAKE.

"P.S. Solomon’s governess and two sisters, who had invited themselves to the commemoration, arrived very opportunely. They found him just as we had left him, and are all three at this present moment in violent convulsions—dreading the irreparable loss of the ‘dear sweet boy,’ and relieving their consanguinal feelings, in the intervals between the fits, by threatening to ‘take the law against the naughty young gen-

tllemen who had seduced their beloved relative—the brutes—into so degrading and dangerous a state.’ Tripes ‘wishes they may get it,’ and Dick confidently affirms that ‘that cock won’t fight.’ ”

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Dr. Puffs, of ———, discovered by the information of a “— d kind friend,” as Sheridan says, that I had ventured to describe the little interview which we had near St. John’s Terrace, with its causes and effects, his rage knew no bounds. He read my No. III. to the end, and stormed and grinned, and would have stamped and sworn, had not a twinge of gout prevented the former, and a sense of decency the latter. He would have doubtless burnt the *N. M. M.* in his anger, if it had not cost him three shillings and sixpence, and fires were *out* — of season. He displayed, too, a degree of weakness, at which, in so old an Oxford man, I must confess I am surprised. Instead of keeping quiet and allowing his friends to talk *of* him, and not *to* him, upon a subject, which he felt to be disagreeable in the extreme, he gave positive orders

to his scout to lay the object of his detestation on the table, within his reach, for he is still confined to his easy chair (as he calls the seat in which he sits when he is uneasy) that he may compel every one who calls upon him to condole with him on his ailments, to read the article aloud to him ; the consequence of this injudicious conduct is, that the Dr. is much more talked about than he otherwise would have been. It seems that he does not so much care about being thought an angry man. or one prone to excesses in the arts of eating and drinking, as the being *misrepresented*—so he has the courage to call it—as a person so incommoded with fat, as to be unable to rub his gouty toe.

He was foolish enough to send to the Bursar of St. Peter's College—the best friend I have, and request him to call upon him ; alleging, in excuse for giving him that trouble, that he was suffering from a slight attack of rheumatism, brought on by the excessive heat of the weather.

Our Bursar accordingly went, not in the least anticipating the warm reception he met with — much warmer than the weather -- the doctor's

causa mali — but thinking to have a little chat about the commemoration concerts and other matters, with perhaps a little scandal about the young ladies, to which old gentlemen are generally addicted, but old bachelors particularly.

Upon giving a masonic rap at the door to let him know he was not a dun, a voice unusually sharp and loud bade him “come in,” which he obeyed as usual, and found Dr. Puffs seated, with an expression of face consonant with his voice—his injured foot carefully pillowed on an ease-and-comfort leg-rester, and the memorable crutch-headed cane in his hand. By his side stood a small round table, with a bottle of sherry, and a very large wine-glass upon it—for he had had an early light dinner of green-pea soup, salmon, lamb, and young potatoes, two little *entremêts*, a lobster salad, and some *fromage de Neufchatel*, and was just taking advantage of his physician’s permission to take four glasses of white wine — but, to prolong the enjoyment, meant to take them in eight *half* glasses. He had drunk a bottle of Dublin *porter* with his dinner, as the medical man had only forbidden *beer*.

“Be seated, sir,” said he to our Bursar, who was walking up to shake hands with him. “Be seated, sir ;” at the same time bowing in a very dignified and distant manner, as low as he could, which was not very low—for his double chin and prominent protuberance of middle rendered the operation difficult, and made him feel choky.

“I have sent for you, sir, to complain of the infamous treatment I have experienced at the pen of that old twaddle, Peter Priggins; he has exposed himself and me too ;” and the crutch descended emphatically upon the rug.

“Really,” replied our Bursar, “I don’t see—”

“*Don’t* see ! — you *won’t* see, sir ; have you read his stupid, dull, foolish, disreputable, ill-concocted stuff ?”

“Certainly, and I think —”

“Ay, *think*—that’s more than he does ; there is not a *thought* in him, except of annoying me — I don’t care a—a—a farthing, sir, about his falsehoods as to my being gouty and greedy, proud and passionate, but to say that I am fat ! —obese !—unwie dy ! when I always button my own gaiters—except during an attack of rheuma-

tism—is such an outrageous example of mendacity, that I'll—I'll—” .

Our Bursar benevolently interrupted him, to give him time to recover his breath, by inquiring what he would do.

“Why, sir, I'll *not* have him rusticated ! I'll *not* have him expelled ! I'll *not* have him discomfited, but I'll have him excommunicated ! I'll have him fined ! put into the pillory ! I'll have him transported ! Nay, I'll be — not blessed ! if I don't have him hanged !”

The peculiar apoplectic hue to which I alluded in my last Number spread rapidly over his face ; the foam rushed from his mouth, like a pig's in a passion ; he raised his crutch higher and higher, as he grew more loud and energetic, and at the climax threw it from his hand (to enable him to point to his gullet with his finger, as he laid his head over his left shoulder, to mimic my last moments) and knocked down the bottle of sherry, the large glass, and the table on which they stood. Nor did the mischief end there. His favourite tom-cat, that was sleeping on the rug, received the weight of his master's

displeasure, and, in order to extricate himself from the superincumbent mahogany, fastened his talons in the gaiterless calf of the angry gentleman's healthy leg — his temper — I mean Tom's — not being so serene as usual, from the fact of one of the undergraduates having paid him off for the annoyances his guttural amours caused him nightly, by pouring half a pint of turpentine on his back, and setting light to it. The doctor's scream of agony, in the key of A sharp in alt, brought the Bursar to his assistance; who only made matters worse, for, not knowing the mechanism of a T rest, he tripped up that ticklish bit of furniture, and the gouty foot fell *flap* to the ground.

The screams in alt were now changed for groans in the base, and so intense was the agony depicted on his face that it shocked our Bursar, and called forth the sympathies of Tom, who “withdrew his claws,” as they say in parliament, and shewed his sensibility by rubbing his sore back against his master's pimply nose—walking backwards and forwards over his stomach, to prolong the pleasing pastime.

“Rub my leg ! rub my leg !” cried the doctor, when he had recovered strength enough to throw Tom out of the window, and wind enough to speak, “rub my leg, my dear sir ! Peter Priggins is right, I can *not* stoop so low !”

Fortunately his scout, who saw Tom flying out of the window, suspected his master was in one of his tantarums, and, coming up, released him from his distressing situation, and our Bursar left him, promising for me that I did not mean to annoy him or any body else.

Kickum too, the hackman, was indignant because I exposed the kicking and biting propensities of Woodpecker and old Peter, “two osses as had yarn’d him more money nor any two in Hoxford. Was their characters to be taken away as hif they was hanimals hof ha hinferior horder ? I’ll write to Priggins hall habout hit.”

So he did, and here is a copy of his very polite communication.

“To Mr. P. Priggins,

“St. Peter’s College-lane.

“Mr. Kickum the livery-stable kipper’s very

respekfull kumplimunts to Mr. Priggins, and if you venters to take away any more of my horses kracters, and injer my trade, He's blest if he won't stick a pitchfork into yor hinde quarters, and larrup your thick head with the besum,

“Your humble servant,

CALEB KICKUM.”

“*Jewly 3.*”

Those who know me will readily conceive that I treated this vulgar production of the hackman with the contempt it deserved; for although Kickum may be a good judge of horseflesh (a *bonus judex carnis equi*, as one of my former masters turned it in his spectator exercise) his note will shew that he has no right to interfere in *litter-ary* matters, out of his own stables.

I am compensated for these little annoyances, to which all great writers are exposed, by the approbation of persons whom I consider superior to any other class of men in the world — the members of the University of Oxford. I am also inclined to think, allowing for the envy they feel at my so totally eclipsing them, that my fellow scouts are highly pleased that one of their

body should throw a lustre on the rest ; at least Dusterly says, that “the hopinions at the Shirt hand Shotbag hare hunanimous hin hasserting that Hi ham han honour to hus hall, hand that my harticles himprove hevery time,” which is very flattering.

I generally go into college once or twice a day — to the buttery ; — not that I have any actual business there ; but it seems so natural to me after so many years of service to leave my hat in the porter’s lodge, have a gossip, and taste the tap, that I cannot resist it. I feel an interest in the college that none but an old servant can feel, though I leave my own *interest*—my weekly one pound one—entirely to our *Principal*. I cannot say that I associate with undergraduates so willingly as I had used to do. A race has arisen that know not Peter, and my suggestions and expostulations are not listened to with the respectful attention they were wont to be. It was only the other day, as I was kindly informing a young gentleman, whose allowance from his father, a country clergyman with a large family, is £200 per annum, that

twelve pair of buckskins, and six of top-boots, was rather too large an order for a man of his income, when, instead of receiving the hint as it was meant, he threatened to "knock a hole right through me," and called me a "meddling old ass." I have even been subjected to the disagreeable operation of having the beer I have been drinking jerked violently over my face and white tie, and pins stuck into the calves of my legs, which are decidedly large for so old a man, to ascertain that they were not *sham*.

On this account I do not visit the undergraduates' rooms so often as formerly; but I still frequent the common-room, where my son is acting as my successor, "*filius tali patre dignus*," and offer my assistance, as deputy corkscrew, when strangers assemble thickly; though, like all young men, he fancies he can do very well without me.

By the senior members I am received with the same benignity as ever, though there is a very great difference to be found in the common room now to what it was formerly—less sociability and an assumption of superior sanctity by men who

—but I never did split, and I won't do so now—only I *could* show that some very bad saints are manufactured out of very good sinners. I often smile as I stand behind the screen in the common room (very handy things those screens are) and hear some of the hardest drinkers in their undergraduate days speaking with pious enthusiasm of the decrease of inebriety, and attributing it to their precepts and example, instead of to the introduction of light continental wines and late dinners. In my younger days, the men used to dine at three o'clock, and had little or nothing to do but drink until six o'clock, and then sally out to the coffee-house, kick up a row in the streets, and home to broiled bones and mushrooms at nine; ending the night with bishop, cardinal, and egg-flip.

Coffee-houses are now annihilated, and six o'clock dinners and claret are seldom followed by suppers. There is also much better accommodation for evening walks round Oxford than there had used to be, which will account for less drinking; but the members of the hand-in-hand club, as the *supersancti* have been properly de-

nominated, are very much mistaken if they fancy that there are not men now as gay and jovial as they were once themselves.

Great allowances are to be made for young men in the heyday of their youth, and just freed from the restraint of school, with the command of a little ready money and unlimited credit. While boys, they fancy themselves men (for many enter at fifteen), and rush into indulgences and extravagances, which they would not do if they were a little older. The system of cramming them too much at schools, so as to leave little or nothing to be done at college (except they read for a class, which not one in fifty does if he be a man of property in *prospectu*), gives them a great deal of spare time which must be filled up somehow ; and how it is filled up, those who have known Oxford longest know best.

One of the many humorous scenes of by-gone days, which crowd my memory, now occurs to me. I shall describe it and call it,

MR. SINGLETON SLIPSLOP'S GREAT-GO PARTY.

The hero of my tale, Mr. Singleton Slipslop,

was of that species usually called “ nice young men”— exceedingly effeminate in person, and over-particular in dress — showing a decided *penchant* for jewellery and fine clothes, with an inordinate taste for perfumery. He would have made a capital *drag* across country—even with the wind due north and a cloudless sky.

There is an old adage, that, when there is but one child, there are sure to be three fools, and the truth of it was fully proved in the family of the Slipslops of Slop Hall, in the moist part of the county of Lincoln. Slipslop *père* was a man of very retired habits, and of a studious turn of mind, seldom wishing to go out into society; which was fortunate, as the fens were not in his days remarkable for the practicability of their roads. He had never thought of a woman since his mother's death, much less of marrying one; but the idea of taking unto himself a wife was suggested to him by one of two circumstances — the reading of a treatise on “ Polygamy among the Turks,” in which were some lusciously-drawn descriptions of a harem, or a hint from his lawyer, Mr. Cute, that it was

a pity so fine a landed property, though it was mostly under water, should go out of the male branch of the Slipslop family.

Mr. Cute saw that the hint had been partly taken, and invited his wealthy client to visit him, and talk the matter over after a quiet dinner and glass of wine. They dined alone, and the subject of conversation was renewed; the lawyer giving several very glowing descriptions of the joys and delights of wedlock, which he was fully justified in doing, as he had been married for fifteen years, and his wife was dead. Though Slipslop's imagination was one of the damp gunpowder species, the match was so perseveringly applied by the lawyer, that it began to ignite; and when once alight, blazed away like the devil—a gunpowder devil I mean.

At this interesting moment the tea and coffee were introduced, and with them Miss Catherine Cute, a young lady having sixteen years, with a pink and white face, and frock, and an irresistible bewitchingness in her pretty blue eyes. The bait was thrown at a judicious moment; Slipslop nibbled, and finally bit—though

some said he was bitten. When young men or women marry persons older than themselves—for money, they are generally applauded for their prudence; whereas their aged partners are called old fools for their pains. This I think wrong. A young man may find courage enough for a wife of any age; but for an old man to marry an old woman is as bad as eating a boiled sucking-pig without salt. A man on the further side of fifty requires a condiment of some sort.

Great were the rejoicings at Slop Hall amongst the guests who could *wade* thither, when Miss C. Cute became Mrs. Slipslop; but still greater when Mr. Epicene, the man-midwife, announced the birth of, and parson Prattle, vicar of Slippery-cum-Sloppery (the parish in which Slop Hall was located), baptized, the hero of my tale and the heir of the entail, Mr. Singleton Slipslop.

Whether it was the surprise at finding himself a real father, or the unwonted quantity of wine he drank to celebrate the event, which affected his health, I cannot say; but the melan-

choly fact is, that he died soon after, leaving Mrs. S. a widow, young, but not disconsolate, with £4000 per annum, and Master Singleton a baby in longs, an orphan.

Although the widow might, by the conditions of the will, wisely drawn up by her father, have married again without any diminution of her income, until her son came of age, she did not do so; being, probably, doubtful whether a second marital would make his exit as speedily, or treat her as indulgently, as her first had done.

It was not likely that a young gentleman, situated as Master Singleton was—an only child of his mother, and she a widow, and heir to four thousand a year, would easily escape being spoiled, crammed, and physicked. The tame rabbit-keeping and nursery-governess system was successfully persevered in until he reached his fourteenth year; when old lawyer Cute, thinking it a very swell thing to talk of “my grandson at Eton,” resolutely insisted on sending him to that royal establishment, to the joy of the son, who had visions of noble playfellows before his eyes, and the consternation of his

mother, who had some doubts in her mind as to improvement of his morals resulting from such associations.

Grandpère was inflexible, and away went poor Singleton in a carriage and four with the old butler and mamma's blessing, his pockets full of money, his eyes of tears, his boxes of nice new clothes, cakes, toys, jams, and jellies. A week had scarcely elapsed, when his anxious mother received a letter sealed with a bit of chewed bread, bearing upon it the mark of the Eton post, and some very dirty fingers. She opened it hastily and easily, and the contents were very satisfactory, as the reader will see.

“ My dear Mamma,

“ I can't stay here, and I won't stay here, and if you don't fetch me away, I'll run away. As soon as old Corkscrew, the butler, had left me at the dame's house, I was shoved into a field among five hundred of the rudest and naughtiest boys you ever saw. They called me spoony, and green, and all sorts of names, and knocked me about, and kicked me till I cried, and then they

kicked me for crying ; *that* I should not care so much about, but they got and eat all my cakes and sweetmeats, broke all my toys, burnt a great hole in my best white jean trousers with a red-hot poker, pulled all the basket buttons off my sky-blue jacket, and chucked my new hat up into a high elm, where it is still. I have to get up at 5 o'clock every morning, clean my master's shoes and boots, knives and forks, make his breakfast, and go without my own. I have not had a mouthful of dinner since I came. My linen is all torn, and I've got two black eyes and a swelled nose, and I would have run home before now, only I've got no money left—the ten guineas you gave me being spent to pay for my footing at the Christopher, and a new barber's pole which another boy stole, and swore it was me. If you don't send for me to-morrow I shall drown myself—I've looked out a nice deep hole on purpose. How are my rabbits?

“ Your affectionate unhappy son,

“ SINGLETON SLIPSLOP.

“ P.S. I have not got a wafer, nor a half-

penny to buy one with ; I must therefore use the Etonian succedaneum.

“ Mrs. Slipslop,
Slop Hall, Lincolnshire.”

The receipt of this affecting epistle threw Mrs. Slipslop into violent hysterics, which were succeeded by a fixed determination to prevent the “horrid suicide” of her son, by sending Mr. Corkscrew off to fetch him home at a minute’s notice. When he arrived at Eton, he found his young master, but could scarcely recognise him ; for, in addition to the ill-treatment indicated in his letter, he had been soundly thrashed for daring to write home to his mother — a fact which his most intimate friend had under a promise of secrecy disclosed to the whole school — and his countenance was a *fac-simile* of a map of England with the counties distinguished by different colours, his tears doing for the rivers.

Grandpère was vexed and indignant at the failure of his favourite project, but withdrew his opposition to his removal from Eton, upon hearing his grandson describe, without exaggeration

or embellishment, the benefits of the fagging system, and the judicious means adopted for rendering gentlemen's sons fully capable of judging of the qualities of their valets, by making them practically acquainted with the duties expected of gentlemen in that "situation."

Singleton's education, however, was not to be neglected; as the future master of Slipslop Hall, if not an M.P., would of course be a J.P. — an office which *requires* a great deal of learning and much study, as any one who frequents the courts of quarter-sessions will readily allow. A private tutor, or as they call such things in Oxford — a *private coach* (I presume from the fact of their having a *drag* upon them in their journey through life) was adopted as a *pis aller*, and the rector was requested by Mr. Cute to come and play a game of cribbage and recommend a proper person as a tutor.

The invitation was accepted of course, for the cellars of Slipslop Hall were well filled, and the contents of the respective bins well known to the worthy clerical. The cards and cribbage-

board were produced, and a strangely-mingled discourse ensued, on the subject of tricks and trumps, tutors and testimonials, pegs and proficiency.

“My deal,” cried the rector, lifting the pack with one hand, and his glass of old East-India with the other, “and I’ll bet a shilling on the rubber; but as I was saying, my young friend, Mr. Shanks of Corpus, is just the man to suit you; he is of high standing — fifteen two — where’s my peg?—in his college, and has taken honours—there’s the king — in the university; he will get Singleton on very fast — two for his heels — and they will agree admirably—two for that pair — and I am sure Mrs. Slipslop will not hesitate to reward his services, for she has—a flush of diamonds — sense enough to appreciate — my crib — his merits; so I’ll write to him on that head—two for his nob—and I’ve no doubt he’ll see that—it’s my game—he can’t do better than take — the odds on the rubber, five to two —our offer.”

The result of this strange mixture of paste-board and classical honours was, that the Reve-

rend Nathan Shanks, of Corpus, condescended to exchange the dulness of his college rooms, and the precarious income arising from cramming undergraduates, for a suite of cheerful rooms at the Hall, and four hundred a year, with the prospect of succeeding the present incumbent in the rectory of Slippery-cum-Sloppery; a sacrifice on his part that justified the laudations he did not fail daily to bestow upon the son in the hearing of the lady-mother.

Mr. Shanks, in addition to a considerable portion of talent and great application, which had insured him one prize and a “double first,” was possessed of more cunning—worldly wisdom is the more elegant term—than is generally discoverable in gentlemen who “waste the midnight oil” in searching for deeply-buried Greek roots, and assigning doubtful dates to still more doubtful historical events. He did not, therefore, irritate his pupil by working him too hard, nor his mother by bringing the “lily-hue of study” on her son by much confinement—the consequence was he became a favourite with both, and enjoyed more license and more com-

forts than generally fall to the lot of that enviable and useful class of men.

“Enviably?” cries out some one in amazement, “what can you mean?” Just let him try the “situation of private tutor in a nobleman or gentleman’s family” for one month, and he will readily discover my meaning. I, Peter Priggins, have known many a high spirit crushed and many a noble heart broken by the experiment—but this is in a parenthesis.

When his seventeenth birthday arrived, Mr. Singleton was pronounced by his tutor as quite fitted by age and accomplishments to enter and reside at Oxford. He could, by the help of cribbs, translate three or four Latin and Greek books into very intelligible (to his tutor) English — do a copy of Hexameter verses by the aid of his gradus, and turn the psalms into elegant Elegiacs, though the phrase *omnipotente manu* occurred in every other line, varied now and then, to prevent the cutting off of the initial vowel by its fraternal expression *cælipotente*. He had also encouraged his talent for English poetry, and received praise and a ten pound note from his

grandfather for a poem on the death of General Wolfe, which commenced thus :

“ Brave General Wolf! uncommon brave !! particular !!!
Who for our sakes climb’d rocks quite perpendicular !”

How it ended I don’t recollect — but in a style quite as deserving of the notes of admiration as of the note of the Bank of England with which his effort was rewarded.

Mr. Shanks established his pupil as a gentleman-commoner in comfortable rooms at St. Peter’s, and himself in snug lodgings conveniently adjacent ; and Mr. Singleton proceeded to show his taste by furnishing his apartments in such a style as a man of £500 per annum ought to do — if he *has* any taste. His predecessor was a rickety man, and had left the furniture rather rickety ; — there were tables with broken flaps and bandy legs ; some chairs with backs and no seats ; others with seats and no backs. Sofas supported by the walls, their hind-legs having been amputated for bonfires, with other articles to match. These were kindly taken to by Mr. Biddy the upholsterer, at his own valuation of

one pound ten, and, when repaired, supplied to some unfortunate freshman as a bargain, at ninety-four pound fifteen; the odd four pound fifteen being given to the duped man's scout for persuading him not to be so extravagant as to order *new* furniture when such *very* good second-hand articles could be had so *very* cheap.

The renovation of his rooms afforded great delight and satisfaction to Mr. Slipslop, and more to Biddy. The walls were covered with scarlet and gold flock paper, at seven shillings per yard, and gold beading at three shillings per foot. The floors carpeted with best Brussels at eleven shillings per yard, of a pattern just suited to college rooms, being an enormous pink peony on a delicate cream-coloured ground. The room was strewed with all sorts of reading-chairs, and reading-tables, though he never read at them, or in them, for fear of injuring them. Bronze and or-molu lamps were set upon those tables, but never used lest the oil should spoil the carpet.

The mantel-shelf was heavily laden with articles of *vertu*, and elegantly-cut scent-bottles. The flock paper was nearly obscured by a col-

lection of paintings and prints; the choice of which being wisely left to the vender, he had displayed his good taste by selecting from his store the most expensive, without any regard to congruity — so that angels were mixed with opera-dancers, saints with prize-fighters, heathen goddesses with dead game, and luscious women in lascivious postures mingled with a group of “portraits of political characters.” Then there were Meerschaum and Turkish pipes,—though he never smoked,—gold, silver, and all sorts of snuffboxes, filled with Fribourg’s best sorts,—though he never took any snuff,—foils, sticks, and boxing-gloves,—though he never “risked his life in any dread encounter,” — a splendid double gun, in a splendid mahogany case—a pair of duelling pistols in ditto,—though he never shot bestials or humans,—and a vast variety of other articles, equally expensive and equally useless to him.

But his pride was his bedroom, with its dressing-table, on which were displayed all the perfumes, soaps, brushes, &c., &c., which Messrs. Price and Gosnell had succeeded in convincing

him “no gentleman ought to be without.” Here Mr. Slipslop passed many a happy hour in viewing his own person in the various coats, waistcoats, and trousers, with which his mahogany wardrobe was crammed.

I need scarcely say that he kept a tiger, and that the tiger was a perfect model of a brute. He wore a sky-blue coat with silver buttons, a pink-striped waistcoat, green plush sit-upons, and flesh-coloured silks in-doors; out of doors the lower garments were exchanged for immaculate white doeskins, and topboots — virgin Woodstocks on his hands, and a glazed hat upon his head with forty-two yards of silver-thread upon it to loop up the brims to two silver buttons. In this dress he attended his master daily, from two to four, in his drive along the Woodstock Road, in an exceedingly neat buggy — for cabs were not yet imported — and was expected to devote the hour before dinner-time to the decoration and perfumery of his person, as his master strongly objected to the natural perfume of humanity.

Mr. Singleton also kept two hunters, though

he never hunted, and sporting dogs, though he never, as he expressed it, "let a piece off in his life, or saw a pointer dog perform a point." Nor were these the only animals he kept because it was a "swell thing" to do so,—more for the benefit of his friends than himself.

It was not at all likely that a gentleman commoner, with £500 per annum, a private tiger and a private tutor, would be in want of friends and acquaintances, even if Mr. Shanks had not taken care to introduce him to the best men of the "reading set," which he did—but they did not suit Singleton, nor Singleton them. They were constantly worrying themselves and him about the peculiar force of some particular Greek particle, or bothering him about the men of the year, who had taken a "first and a second," or a "second and a first," though he cared for none of those things; the consequence was a mutual coolness succeeded by a mutual cut.

The set he sought and succeeded with were the idlers—men of fashion—that is, Oxford fashion: beings who never read, because it was a bore; never hunted, because they wanted pluck for it;

never rowed, because it spoiled their hands ; and never fished, because it spoiled their complexions. Their mornings were passed in dressing, lounging to each other's rooms, and indulging in talk — it could not be called conversation—about music, of which they did not know a note. — Green-rooms, the interiors of which they had never seen — and women whom they only knew by name, though they let fall sundry hints of the expensiveness of their favours. They strolled down the High Street once or twice, to show their coats, took a quiet drive or ride, and then dressed for dinner, vying with each other in stocks, waistcoats, and silk stockings ; dined quietly, and talked of the merits of their respective tailors and bootmakers, sipped a few glasses of light wine with their dinner, a little claret afterwards, and after an early cup of coffee, with its accompanying *chasse*, lounged again, and talked again of the virtues of their tailors and their women, and fondly fancied they had passed a “gentlemanly, quiet day.”

Such was the emasculated set of whom Mr. Slipslop made one ; but his most intimate friend,

though he hated him cordially, was the Honourable Mr. Spunge, son of the Lord Viscount Spendall, Baron Drypurse, of Starveline, in the county of Chester. He was entered as a gentleman-commoner, with a very limited supply of pewter—£150 per annum, and the prospect of the family living of Starveline as soon as he could get ordained, or, as he called it, *japan'd*. Upon his £150 he not only contrived to live, but to live well, without running into debt ; he was very gentlemanly, very clever, and very insinuating in his manners and address. He easily ascertained from Mr. Slipslop's tiger the amount of his master's income, and the nature of his habits and disposition, and when he found that he was disgusted with the reading men, to whom he had been introduced by his tutor, he called upon him, and made him happy, by establishing him among the fashionables who arrogated to themselves the title of *nulli secundi*.

These *nulli secundi* were the willing victims of Mr. Spunge. He not only rode their horses for them, but bought, sold, and exchanged them ; drew plans, and made models of new

dennets and stanhopes; selected milliners' apprentices, and looked out lodgings for them; recommended Schneiders and bootmakers, and directed them in the choice of their tigers' liveries. From all these services he added largely to his income, and the only recompense he looked for or received beyond their grateful thanks was that he breakfasted with one, dined with another, wineed with a third, and borrowed a few sovereigns now and then from all. But to Mr. Slip-slop he adhered most perseveringly, and gained so great an ascendancy over him, by making himself master of all his secrets, that he not only lived upon him in college, but kindly condescended to pass his vacations with him at the Hall—Slipslop *mère* being too highly gratified at her son's intimacy with an honourable to offer the least opposition to a plan so vastly convenient, and Mr. Shanks too idle and careless to think anything about the matter.

Mr. Spunge made himself at home. He shot in the well-filled preserves, fished in the well-stored lakes, hunted with the Lincolnshire fox-hounds, and invited the members thereof to breakfast or dine at the Hall, as the "meet," or

the end of the run suggested ; he invited the ladies to archery meetings, and gipsying parties — ordered the *déjeûners* — emptied and replenished the bins — in short, did all that the heir ought to have done himself.

Did Singleton like all this ?—Decidedly not ; but he was so completely in Mr. Spunge's power that he dared not object. He tried once, and only once, to rid himself of his tormentor by resolutely insisting that six dozen of champagne was too much to be iced at once for a party of sixteen ; and was proceeding to ring the bell to tell Corkscrew, the butler, to ice only half the quantity, when Mr. Spunge quietly informed him that any interference with his plans would be attended with the disclosure to his mother of all Mr. Singleton's correspondence with Miss Pauline Pincushion, the straw-bonnet maker in St. Clement's. It is needless to say the six dozen were iced.

Such was the power acquired by Mr. Spunge over his friend that when the period arrived for the examinations, and Mr. Singleton, by the aid of his private coach, and a little interest with

the examiners, got his *testamur*, or certificate of having given satisfaction in *litteris humanioribus*, he told him coolly and plainly that he must give a great-go party, and not confine it to the *nulli secundi*—undertaking to relieve him of the trouble of writing the invites by doing it for him.

“Singleton,” said he emphatically, “you *must* give a party—it is usual—I *must* be there—you cannot do without me. We *must* have the fast men—your set is too slow. *I* will invite them; give me some plain cards.”

“But,” interfered Singleton, “*what* men will you invite? I think I ought to know that; I’m not going to sit down to feed with every body. I don’t know a man out of our own set.”

“Pray, my dear Singleton, sit down, and don’t be fussy—I know every body. The reading men are greater spoonies than yourself, and won’t come; the saints will hypocricize for a while, but will all come eventually, and get *very* drunk; the reprobates will not hesitate a moment.”

“So then,” cried Slipslop, “I shall be ex-

pected to *exceed* myself — get tipsy overnight, and be very sick and ill in the morning. I would rather—”

“My dear fellow,” said Spunge, “pray do not go on so, you have made me spell Smythe’s name with an i, an offence he never forgives.”

The cards were written, and thirty men invited in this form :—“Wine with me, Thursday, at 6.—Singleton Slipslop.” The inviter, finding all opposition useless, called to me with his usual “*Petarrh*.” To which in a rage, at his nasty effeminate way of pronouncing my name, I replied “*Sarrh*?”

“I am going to have a few friends on Thursday; lay for thirty. Port and sherry — plain dessert — no ices — no champagne — no claret — coffee at eight, and no supper.”

“Bishop or cardinal — egg-flip or punch?”

“Neither, *Petarrh*; we shall retire early.”

“Leave all that to me, Peter,” said Mr. Spunge; “Mr. Slipslop is unused to such parties.”

“But I insist—”

“On having a good party, and doing the cor-

rect thing. Now take a quiet turn in your buggy, and Peter and I will settle all in a few seconds," observed Mr. Spunge, as he deliberately turned the donor of the feast out of his own rooms, and turning round to me with perfect *nonchalance*, said " Peter, I mean to have a lark. Take these cards, and see they are delivered. Go to Mr. Pastyface, the confectioner, and order a good dessert for thirty, with lots of ices, to be sent in regularly every half-hour, all the evening; then to Mr. Crusty, the wine-merchant—the Slipslop wine is too good to waste on every body, and order one dozen sherry, four dozen port, strong and hot, and two six-dozen cases of claret, well brandied—I mean every man to be drunk. Take care that the cook has an exceedingly nice supper ready at nine.—Broiled chickens, bones of all sorts, lobster salads, devilled kidneys—every thing in short that he can get. You, yourself, Peter, will make with your usual skill ten jugs of bishop, ten of cardinal, ten of egg-flip or punch—let there be plenty of cigars, and plenty of malt at supper—I mean the men to be drunk. Order no wheelbarrows

from the Star, as I limit the invites to in-college men."

I willingly obeyed, as I liked a little mischief, and foresaw a few perquisites.

The memorable Thursday arrived, and with it all the guests ; some of whom had never been introduced or spoken to their entertainer in their lives. Mr. Slipslop was of course the president, and Mr. Spunge, by self-election, his vice, who took care that the *nulli secundi* should be mixed up heterogeneously with the company, and not, as they intended, packed up by themselves.

Knock after knock, and "come in" after "come in," soon filled the tables ; and Mr. Singleton Slipslop arose, and with dignity proposed, "Church and King," which went off very quietly. He seemed disposed to linger before he gave another toast, when an impudent dog, who had never spoken to him in his life, called out, "I say, old fellow, this is cursed slow — let's have the 'Rest of the Royal Family' — get rid of the nobility, and begin the evening."

Mr. Slipslop looked to his vice for sympathy in his disgust, but Mr. Spunge "begged to

second the motion ;” and “ Peter,” said he, “ place a bottle of claret before every gentleman—passing the wine heats it. Those who prefer porting it, may port it ; and, gentlemen, I beg to propose that every man knocks the handle off his glass—then bumpers and no taps.”

“ Hurrah ! Bravo !” and sundry other noises indicated assent, and “ *dicto citius*,” every glass was denuded of its stand-upon by a smart rap from the handle of a knife.

Mr. Slipslop was the last to follow the example set him by his friend ; but, seeing all opposition useless, screwed up his courage, and smashed his crystal.

“ Bumpers, gentlemen, if you please,” called out Mr. Spunge. “ Now that we’ve shown our loyalty, I’ll give you a toast, ‘ The Ladies,’ with nine times nine.”

Then commenced the usual indications of delight. Cries of all sorts — who-hoops ! — hurrahs ! and screams—the rattling of glasses, plates, knives, forks, and spoons—the thumping of fists on the table, till every dish, plate, and jug, seemed in convulsions, and “ one cheer more,”

made the windows and doors shake in their sockets. "And next, gentlemen, with permission from the chairman, I give you — (there's wine left in your glass, Smythe — off with it), another bumper toast — fill up (there's daylight in your glass, Smythe — it won't do — I'll have no shirking) — Gentlemen, I beg to propose the health of a man who has done honour to himself and the college, by inviting us all here to-day, to celebrate the passing of his great-go. (Hear ! hear ! hear !) Gentlemen, I've known him intimately all his college life ; and though some of you may fancy him rather *slow*, I know enough of him to assure you, you cannot drink his wine *fast* enough. I'll not detain you, gentlemen, from the excellent fare provided for you ; but give you, Mr. Singleton Slipslop's good health, with the due honours."

This toast, of course, called forth a repetition of all the former noises : but with a prolongation of them intended to recompense the liberality of the entertainment.

Mr. Slipslop's *amour propre* was gratified — his eyes sparkled as he rose and filled a bumper,

and, bowing gracefully to the company, said, "I've no hesitation in saying, gentlemen, that I—I—I—I've no hesitation, gentlemen, in saying—"

"What a lie!" cried Smythe, half *sotto voce*.

"That I—I—I — am very glad to see you." And down he sat, having achieved more than he had ever done before in his life.

"Now," said Mr. Spunge, "we'll have a song—who'll begin?"

"Smythe, Smythe, Smythe!" was the general cry.

"Really," replied Smythe, "I should be very happy, but I've got a bad cold."

"From smoking a damp cigar, I suppose?" cried little Mr. Brown. "*Omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus.*"

"A fine! a fine!"

"Well," said Mr. Brown, "I only wish all my fines could be paid the same way — *nunc gloria claret.*"

"Another fine! another fine!"

"That's rather too bad — but here goes."

And Mr. Brown, having absorbed two extra bumpers, sat down; and Mr. Smythe pretending to cough up something which was *not* in his throat, began with a very comic expression of face, "On the Banks of Allan Water," but was interrupted with loud cries of "That's sentimental,—d—n sentimental — let's have a comic song—All round my hat — If I had a donkey—May-day in the morning, &c. &c. &c.

Poor Smythe in vain tried another sentimental—it would not do. "Take a little *rosin*," cried Brown, pouring a bumper of wine into his glass. "ῥόδον μὲν ἄριστον, Pindar says, but he's a liar."

Brown was fined again, and Mr. Smythe sung in excellent style something about a feminine donkey that had a masculine child, that was brought up under Mr. Martin's act for getting up a ladder, which seemed to give great satisfaction.

"Mr. Smythe and his song — hurrah ! hurrah !" and the noise grew louder and more furious.

Mr. Smythe returned thanks, and called on

Mr. Singleton Slipslop for a song and a glass of vanille ice.

With the latter request the host immediately complied, but positively declined the former.

“Then,” said his vice, “you must tell a story, make a speech, or drink a tumbler of wine.”

Mr. Slipslop could only perform the last feat, and that with a very bad grace, as the wine began to get very nauseous, and the olives—which fashion had induced him to try to swallow—did not operate as a composer to his stomach; he bolted the dose, however, with such a wry face as to produce more fun among his friends than any song or story could have done.

He was informed that, like the saints, he “had a call,” and he called on Mr. Spunge, by way of paying him off, as he thought: but Mr. Spunge immediately answered the call, by singing an exceedingly good song—about the adventures of three flies—exceedingly well.

Then Mr. Spunge’s health was drunk, and

so great was the zeal displayed, that, to Singleton's horror, every man, in addition to shouting and screeching, dug his knife as deep as he could, by repeated chops, into the well-polished mahogany table.

Other songs succeeded, though many of the singers wanted voice and ear, and some knew tunes but no words, and others the words but no tunes. Then began some pleasant practical jokes, such as pelting each other with strawberries, nuts, and olives; putting large dabs of ice down one man's back, and pouring a glass of claret into another man's white sit-upons' pocket, with other little innocent divertimentos, such as withdrawing his chair when a gentleman got up to make a speech, and causing him to "come down with a run." Upsetting the sofa and the four occupants, which caused the back to part company from the legs and seat; then of course the squabs and pillows were hurled about in all directions, smashing bottles, glasses, and plates, the chandeliers, and French lamps.

Poor Singleton, whose eyes were almost too glazy to discern what was going on, saw that his

delicate carpet was ruined for ever, as rivers of wine were flowing over it, meandering between islands of crushed strawberries, squashed oranges, and rapidly-melting lumps of iced creams; he rose with great difficulty, and, holding on by both arms of his chair, begged and prayed the gentlemen to "behave as sich," but was immediately knocked down by a well-aimed tipsy-cake — the gravy and almonds with which it was besmeared and studded leaving his countenance the exact model of a "chicken in white sauce and mushrooms."

Just as he had scooped the liquid out of his eyes with difficulty, to ascertain by whose hands the missile had been hurled, and was about to vent his indignation at the indignity in very strong language, Mr. Spunge stopped the flow of eloquence by throwing himself back in his chair, and applying both feet with a sudden jerk to the end of the table. The consequence was, that Mr. Slip-slop fell backwards under the grate, overwhelmed with the whole dessert, ices, and wines; then, of course, there was a general row—tables, chairs, books, and men were heaped in pyramids upon the fallen host — coat-tails were torn off -- caps

and gowns broken and torn to ribbons—one gentleman amused himself by thrusting a foil through the pictures, another by playing very much out of tune on a keyed bugle—a third accompanying him on the poker and tongs. At last, loud cries of “Shame ! Shame ! Too bad ! Pull him out !” induced Mr. Spunge to restore the table to its proper place, and to dig Mr. Slipslop out of his tumult. He was resurrectionized more dead than alive ! Some were alarmed, but Mr. Spunge untied his neckcloth, unbuttoned his shirt-collar, and with the help of two or three of the soberest carried him to his bedroom, where they peeled him and put him into bed — but not by himself — for there lay his tiger, who had been missing for some time, in a worse state than his master, in consequence of having emptied the bottoms of some five or six dozen of claret-bottles.

In went poor Singleton with his servant, Mr. Spunge ensuring the comforts of both, by diligently cutting off the bristles of all the hair and clothes’-brushes he could find with a razor, and strewing them in the bed, and then emptying the contents of two ewers of water over their

heads and faces. But the unkindest cut of all was shaving off one of Mr. Singleton's whiskers and the corresponding eyebrow, of whose well-cultivated beauties he was deeply enamoured; the deficiency being charitably made good by the aid of burnt cork and tallow-grease. As his partiality for perfumes was well known, the counterpane was thoroughly soaked with eau-de-Cologne, esprit-de-lavande, bouquet-du-roi, and other delicate distillations.

On his return to the party, Mr. Sponge found several men, especially the *nulli*, in a very bad way; so a procession was formed, and every drunken man was carried by four staggering half-drunken men first round the quadrangle—Brown playing “The Dead March in Saul,” on the keyed bugle, accompanied, *obligato*, by Smythe on a tin trumpet—and then to their respective beds, where, of course, burnt cork and red paint were properly applied, and the position of the bedsteads changed, to ensure their not knowing their own faces or their whereabouts when they awoke in the morning.

The procession was then re-formed, and re-

turned to the tune of "Oh, dear! what can the matter be?" and, in passing under the window of the vice-principal's rooms, was stopped to give three groans in honour of that individual, who was not a very popular character in college.

He was a very passionate, but a very prudent person. His rage would have led him to rush from his rooms and inflict summary justice on the offenders; but his prudence induced him to send for the porter, and order him to take down their names, and inquire in whose rooms the row originated.

"Mr. Slipslop, sir, giving his great-go party," replied the college Cerberus.

"Then go to his rooms, and desire him to call on me to-morrow morning, and tell all the gentlemen to go to their rooms directly, and to call on me to-morrow morning also."

Cerberus proceeded to execute his commission; but Mr. Sponge, who suspected his errand, was hostile, sported oak, and, mounting the window-sill, cut into him, through the open staircase-window, with a tandem-whip, until he

danced and bellowed with the pain, and was finally forced to beat a retreat.

“Bravo ! hurrah !” cried all. “What shall we do till supper-time?”

“Let us go to the Star,” said Mr. Spunge, “and hear the harper.”

This was agreed upon ; but just as they were starting, poor Mr. Brown, from his exertions in playing the bugle, and from his having been fined for talking in unknown tongues — was getting very tipsy and obstreperous. He hiccupped a positive resolution not to go to the Star, as the barmaid had boxed his ears the night before, and hinted that he had an assassination — as he would insist on calling an assignation — with some very pretty girl somewhere or other. Mr. Spunge suggested to Mr. Smythe, whose performances on the tin horn had reduced him to much the same state as his brother musician, that the young lady in question was his, Mr. Smythe’s, *chère amie*, and told him he was surprised he put up with such treatment so coolly. Upon this, Mr. Smythe got very hot, and a regular quarrel ensued, which, by the

judicious instigation of the bystanders, ended in a regular fight, attended by no very serious results, beyond making the principals perfectly insensible.

Mr. Spunge, therefore, took Mr. Slipslop's best beaver, and, after dipping the crown in some lamp-oil, rubbed it against the chimney-back, and then against Messrs. Smythe and Brown's faces, preparing them for the character of Othello; he next dipped Mr. Slipslop's silver-handled shaving-brush into an inkstand, and made a luxurious lather in the elegant silver soap-dish, with which he prepared both their heads for the process of shaving; he contented himself, however, with sawing, or chopping off the hair upon the back part of their heads only, so that when they looked in the glass they should not be able to detect the trick that had been played them. The plot succeeded, for they walked into chapel next morning, to the great amusement of the men, and horror of the dean, with their faces only half denuded of the soot and oil, and the rear of their heads resembling a worn-out hair-trunk. They were put into bed for the night,

with Mr. Slipslop and his tiger, with their heads where their feet ought to have been, to give them more roomy accommodation.

Mr. Spunge and the rest of the party, now reduced to fourteen or fifteen, then sallied out of college, and fortunately met Mr. Pastyface, the confectioner's man, bearing a large tray of coffee and toast to a party of reading men. The weight was so great as to require the aid of both his hands to carry it ; instead, therefore, of taking off his hat as usual, he was forced to show his respect by only bowing as they passed. At this Mr. Spunge pretended to take offence, and after abusing the poor man, took his hat off *for* him, and kicked it into the gutter. Of course, in endeavouring to regain it, it was necessary the tray should be deposited on the ground, and as soon as that was done, and before he could recover from his stooping posture, a judicious application of Mr. Spunge's foot sent him head first among the coffee-pots and toast-dishes, the contents of the former scalding his face and hands, and the latter rendering his dirty jacket more offensively greasy than it was before.

The man himself did not complain, for he was used to such things, and knew that he should be well paid for his scaldings on the morrow ; but the passers-by expressed their indignation by cries of “ Shame ! ” “ Don’t stand it ! ” “ Knock them down ! ” And one gentleman, more zealous than the rest, ventured to assist the tart-man to rise, but quickly found himself seated by his side in the middle of the tray and boiling coffee.

This of course led to a row, and the row to a fight, which would probably have terminated in a town and gown battle, as numbers were collecting at the well-known war-cry, had not the proctor, with two *bull-dogs*—as his assistants are called—and the marshal, made their appearance at the corner of the street. The effect upon the inimical parties was much the same as the entrance of a dog into a field upon a flock of sheep : they first stood still to gaze upon the common enemy, and then turned and ran away as fast as they could.

The proctor only caught one unhappy townsman, who was too busily engaged in looking about for his two front teeth to see his approach,

but sent the bull-dogs and the marshal in pursuit. The latter marked out Mr. Spunge from his quarry, and away they went down High-street, Derby pace, upsetting several inoffensive pedestrians in their way. Both were swift of foot, but the marshal ran cunning, and would have caught his man, had not he slipped up in trying to turn the corner by the physic-gardens, which gave Mr. Spunge so much the advantage that he was in Christ Church meadow, and into Davis's punt and across into St. Aldate's, before the official had finished manipulating the part of his person most injured by the fall.

The bull-dogs were completely thrown out, and my party returned in safety to college and supper at nine—by availing themselves of the sinuosities of sundry lanes and alleys, managing to collect, in their passage, nine knockers, four bell-pulls, and an old lady's bonnet, something the worse for wear.

Mr. Spunge took the president's chair, and great were the dilapidations caused to the viands, for wine always makes men hungry. Still, as the supper was laid for thirty, and only fourteen

sat down to it, I managed to collect sufficient to remunerate me for my trouble.

After supper, I put the "nightcaps" on the table; and after some gallons had been consumed, and the same songs sung over again, I put all the men to bed except Mr. Spunge, who had absorbing qualities of so high a character as never to be what is termed "the worse for liquor."

The only unpleasant incident that occurred during the consumption of my compounds, arose from an Irish gentleman breaking a bowl of punch upon a man's head, and threatening to call him out for objecting to lime-juice. Mr. Spunge put an end to his remarks, however, by throwing a glass of very hot egg-flip into his capacious mouth, and turning him out of the room, while the agony caused by the adhesive application rendered him incapable of resistance.

On the following morning, on my coming into college, I found Mr. Slipslop nearly naked, thrashing his tiger with a bootjack — not for getting drunk, but for daring to sleep with him, and laughing at his absent whisker and eyebrow.

“*Petarrh*,” said he, “see this beast outside of college and a coach — pay his wages and his fare, and nonsuit him of his livery; then take my compliments to the vice-principal, and say I am going down into the country.”

“I beg pardon, *sarrh*,” cried I, “but Mr. Spunge said you wasn’t to move out without his leave.”

“Mr. Spunge be ——”

“And the vice-principal, *sarrh*, has sent his compliments to say, you must call on him as soon as you can.”

“But how can I go this figure?”

“He really did look very unpresentable; but by dint of shaving off the other whisker — in attempting which he cut his face three times, being very nervous, and putting a small green verandah over his damaged eyebrow, he mustered courage to venture out. In passing through his room, the scene of the last night’s debauch—either the sight of his damaged “furniture and other effects,” or the odour of “spirituous liquors and compounds,” which had not yet ceased to exist, caused him to hurry into the

open air with greater agility than I had ever seen him display before.

Mr. Spunge met him at the foot of the staircase ; and, after assuring him of his regret at not being able to prevent Messrs. Smythe and Brown acting as decapillaries upon his whisker and eyebrow, insisted on going to the vice-principal's with him, and taking the blame of all that had occurred upon himself. This he did in the most gentlemanly and courageous manner, knowing that that functionary would not venture to punish the only *honourable* he had in college.

Mr. Slipslip got off with a severe reprimand and a bilious fever ; and Mr. Spunge was liberated after a short lecture, ending with " My compliments to Lord Spendall, your honourable father, when you write home."

So ended Mr. Singleton Slipslop's great-go party.

CHAPTER V.

I HATE shaving, or being shaved ; it's a disagreeable operation, admitting only of the alternative of cutting yourself, or being cut by some one else ; and no man likes to be *cut*, either actually or metaphorically. Then the temporary obscuration of three-fourths of one's face by a mass of soapsuds is unpleasant ; for no one, even a schoolboy, likes to be *lathered*. The mowing process is certainly the most objectionable, particularly when one's countenance, like Esau's, the founder of the sect called *hairy'uns*, bears such a harvest as to require being laid in swarthes, like a grass-field with a heavy crop upon it. It is not pleasant either to have one's nose made a handle of by the operator, and to twist one's facial muscles into positions both ludicrous and painful. But however disagreeable the opera-

tion is, it is one which both fashion and cleanliness require ; and if a man cannot perform upon himself, like a self-acting pianoforte, he must employ a substitute, however discordant it may be to his feelings.

Every college has, as part and parcel of its establishment, an officer called a tonsor, who, like the chest of drawers in the Deserted Village, has "a double debt to pay," being not only required at any moment to respond to the call of "one hair cut and curled," (as Mr. Keeley says in the farce called the "Burlington Arcade") or "one gentleman to be shaved," but also to procure a supply of servitors and bible-clerks, *sub rosa*, who are able and willing, in order to increase their very limited allowances, to do impositions and college exercises for those who are unable or unwilling to do them for themselves. This is now the most profitable part of their profession, as they get a prettier per-centage from the inside of their *employé's* heads, than they do from the outside of those of their employers—at least, since the expulsion of pigtails, powder, and pomatum.

Mr. Chops, the tonsor of St. Peter's, kindly operates half-price on the college servants, and I gladly avail myself of his services, as I am too nervous to look myself in the face with an edged tool in my hand, ever since, in my first attempt to remove a few sprouting signs of manhood, I mowed off not only the crop itself, but three inches and a half of the epidermis on which it grew along with it. Mr. Chops makes me nervous sometimes, as he has acquired by constant practise, and at a considerable expense, that peculiar tremulousness of the hand which invariably follows "potations pottle-deep;" and when he has exceeded beyond his wont, "cut follows cut," as the broadsword-players say, in rapid succession, and all expostulations are speedily ended by a *thrust* of the soap-brush so near the region of eloquence, as to render it unsafe to "show one's teeth," so he can "cut and come again" with impunity. One thing, however, I must in justice state—he supplies styptics and sticking-plaster gratis.

I have but little doubt in my own mind that Xenophon and the other Greeks of old, called

their foreign foes *οι βαρβαροι* from their proficiency in cutting, gashing, and drawing blood, and that thence the modern designation barber was derived ; though it must be allowed that the ancients had the advantage of us moderns, as they could and did return the compliment, which the rigidity of our laws will not permit us to do. We must “grin and bear it,” as Mr. Polito used to assure the laughing hyena when he disturbed his slumbers by stirring him up with the long pole.

A few mornings since, when Mr. Chops called to operate upon me, I felt that I was in danger of being mangled more unmercifully than usual, as he always indicates an addition to his habitual shakiness, by humming the tune of “Come where the aspens *quiver*,” to prepare his victim for his fate ; and this particular morning I shuddered as I heard him harmonizing louder than usual, and ending with a prolonged shake upon the *penultima* of the last word as he opened my parlour-door.

“M—m — mor — morning, Peter,” said he, for he stammers most awfully.

I politely returned his salutation, and with timorous fortitude submitted my bare throat to his weapon. The application of the brush was indicative of what was to follow; for the first thrust which he made at my chin lighted upon my nose, and then he flourished and ran as rapidly over the lineaments of my face as a harper, ignorant of his art, does over the strings of his instrument, seldom hitting the right chord, as Horace better expresses it :—

“Qui chordâ semper oberrat eâdem.”

He then proceeded to strop his razor, and, to my surprise, succeeded in doing so without cutting his thumb off. He next seized me by the nose, and putting the high pressure upon his thumb and finger, in order to “hold on by,” as the sailors say, applied the cold iron to my cheek with much the same sort of touch that a miniature-painter uses in putting in his background. Having cleared about three inches, and drawn blood in three places, he relinquished his hold to apply his styptic, and coolly observed :—

“You’ve c—c—cotched it n—ni—nicely.”

I could not speak, so I merely nodded to intimate that I felt the truth of his remark; but when he added, "In the p—p—apers," I threw a look interrogatory into my eyes which elicited this explanation.

"Mrs. Ch — Ch — Ch—ops and my gals t—take in the p—p—enny p—p—eriodical of l—l—itterater and B—B—ell's Letters, and there's a cr—cr—itic (meaning *critique*, I presume) on your 'L—l—ife and T—t—imes' in this n — n —umber; they l—lay it on p — pretty thick (here he renewed the application of the soap-brush) I can t—t—ell you, they've c—c—ut you up m — most inhumanely (a gash an inch long just under my nose;) they're sh—sh—arp pr—pr—actitioners, and don't se — seem to care for the f — f —eelings of no — body (two drops of styptic that burnt like caustic, and brought the tears into my eyes). I se—ee you f—f—eels it. You shall se — ee it when they've d — d — one with it in the b—b—uttery; they've w—wiped you down handsome;" and he concluded his performances and remarks by removing the superfluous soapsuds with his napkin.

I put on my coat and a philosophical sneer, and positively declined reading "Mrs. Ch—Ch—op's ch—ch—eap publication."

"Well, if you w—w—on't, good b—b—y," said Mrs. Chops, resuming his rounds and his roundelay, "Come where the aspens quiver." I was congratulating myself on having escaped without having my nose chopped off, and my best feelings lacerated by the concentrated venom of some "*judex fatalis incestusque*," when I was interrupted by a loud single rap, which would have thrown any of my former masters into sudorifics, and which caused Mrs. Priggins to look out of temper and the window, and say:—

"Deary me, how very tiresome ! Broome and Dusterly coming to call, and my hair still in *puppy lots*," which, she says, is French for curl-papers.

No woman is exempt from what I call personal hypocrisy, and Mrs. P., of course, has her share. She tells every body "she wears her own hair," and so she does ; but it has been cut off her head for these ten years, and made up,

by Chops's ingenuity, into false-fronts ; each of which looks to me, as it lies for the night in its oblong pasteboard-box, like two poodle-dog's ears nailed to a long leather-strap ; to render the deception practised on the public more complete, the curls are put into *papillotes* as long as Mrs. P. "is in *dish-a-bill*," which is until she "cleans herself" for dinner.

She, of course, vanished up stairs, as "she was not fit to be seen that figger," and I opened the door to admit my friends Broome and Dusterly, who always run in couples like the Pylades and Orestes of ancient, and the Pontos and Snowballs of modern days. They seem to be almost as inseparable as those pretty little Indian birds, which my youngest daughter calls *affidavits*, though their proper name is, I believe, *Averdevats*.

I concluded that they had merely called to take their customary "morning," and was going to send Peter, jun., to the buttery to procure the requisites, but was interrupted by Dusterly, who called out, emphatically as usually :—

"Stop ha hinstant ! now, Mr. Broome, hout with the hinformation."

Broome dived into the depths of his coat-pocket, and with some difficulty fished up a double diurnal newspaper, and, covering the dining-table with it, turned it inside and outside, and at last found and pointed out to me an article headed "*Reviews of the Periodicals*," directing my attention more particularly to the remarks on the *N. M. M.* Upon skimming it over as rapidly as possible, I found "Paper by the Editor — good as usual. By Mrs. Trollope — satirical as ever, with two engravings. Several others, all intended to please, which will be much approved of by some people, but perhaps not by others. Peter Priggins again — more university profligacy — we've no doubt it's all false — that is, fictitious, imaginary, though we think it a true picture of Oxford life — rather over-coloured, or over-drawn — but by the hand of an artist. We think it bad taste to bring such scenes before the public, though we confess we approve of their exposition, especially as we have had scenes of naval and military life, and of high life and low life *usque ad nauseam*. Though we think the publication of life at college and

public schools may do a great deal of harm, we are still of opinion that it will certainly produce a great deal of good. The author, we understand, has been offered £3,000 and a D. C. L. degree, by the delegates of the University Press, if he will allow his MS. to be printed at the Clarendon, and published amongst the other standard works of that admirable and useful institution."

"Well," said Broome, dodging me round the dining-table, until he got me into a favourable position for an examination, by placing his back against the window, and causing the light to fall upon my face, "well, is that true?—are we to congratulate you on being an honorary doctor?"

"Hand hif you his to ave hall that here ham-mount, you can hafford to beave andsome to han hold friend—his hit true?"

"Quite as true," I replied, "as the accounts you may have seen lately in the papers of the enormous sums of money given by their respective publishers to the authors of the most popular works of the day."

"But," continued Broome, smiling at the

dubious looks of Dusterly, who could not quite comprehend whether I was to be a D. C. L. or not, "what answer do you make to the charge of overcharging your descriptions—overcolouring or overdrawing, as the critic calls it?"

"Haye, hexhaggerhating as hi call hit ! What do you say to that?"

"Simply this : You both of you know as well as I do, that many such scenes as I have described have really been witnessed in Oxford—(and in Cambridge too, I've no doubt—*similes similibus gaudent*) unsanctioned, of course, by the authorities. To please the taste of the public, which, in these days, requires highly-seasoned dishes, it is absolutely necessary to embellish, or, in the words of the critic before us, to overdraw and overcolour. This remark will apply not only to writings intended to *amuse*, but to those meant to *instruct* ; indeed, to very many things besides. Do you think," said I, pointing to a very flattering likeness of Mrs. P. in a very handsome gilt frame, carefully covered over with fly-defying yellow gauze, "do you think that my old woman would have allowed that

misrepresentation of herself to hang there if the artist had not improved upon nature? *ut pictura poesis* — the best book that ever was written would not *sell* in these days without a great name, a grand and startling title-page, or plenty of puffing and patronage, and scarcely, with all these advantages, without twenty-four ‘etchings by Mr. Straightlegs.’ This is peculiarly the age of embellishment,

‘Nova nomina rerum
Protulit ætas nostra.’

What mamma would send her son to *Mister Birch’s school*? but *Doctor B.’s* “classical and commercial academy” for the instillation of merchants’ accounts and metaphysics is a very different thing. Mrs. P. calls having a few friends to tea and talk, ‘giving a swurry and conversation,’ and designates her little back bed-room as her ‘boodoye;’ a common headache is termed ‘a nervous disarrangement of the internal contents of the occiput,’ and even a pair of boots are called a ‘membraneous envelopment of the lower extremities.’ ”

“True,” said Broome, “for Mrs. B. calls my

old arm-chair a 'footeel' and the footstool an 'ottymum.' "

"And my missus," observed Dusterly, "calls hour hass hon which hour Enry rides, his 'helegant hanimal for oss hexercise.' "

"As to the critic's speculation," I continued, "about the good or harm likely to result from my stories of college life, I can only say that they are not written with a view of effecting any change whatever in the sentiments of the public towards the universities, but merely to amuse the readers of the *N. M. M.*; and if they prove offensive to any one of its numerous perusers, he has the remedy in his own power—let him leave my leaves uncut, and my contributions unread."

Mrs. P. here made her appearance "commyfo," and invited my friends to a "little *déjinnay*," in the shape of bread, cheese, and ale, of which Dusterly eat and drank enormously, declaring that a "little snap was more ealthy than a great cloggy meal."

When they had taken their "little snap," and their departure, I strolled into my garden, and found my son and successor, Peter, junr., busily

employed in washing out the barrels of a double gun, under the pump, preparatory to "the first," not for himself, but for one of his masters, who always resides during "the long," for the purpose of enjoying a little fishing and shooting, without being pestered and annoyed by the interruptions of the undergraduates.

The sight of the gun brought to my mind an old story of "a day's shooting," which I shall tell by and by.

The shooting about Oxford would be very good if the men could only get leave to go into the preserves; but as that is a very difficult thing to obtain, unless they happen to have a good introduction to the landlords or farmers in the neighbourhood, they are driven to the open and unpreserved parts of the country, which are not very thickly populated with partridges or pheasants, except for the first week or two of the season. I myself have seen ten men — snobs — in top-boots, with tinder-boxes (*i. e.* flint guns) in their hands, marching down Wolvercot field, massacreing every thing, feathered or flicked, that got up before them, without *leave* or *licence*,

and that in the good old times when gentlemen did *not* pay their fishmongers in kind, but distributed their game to their friends. When the men come up in October, there are but a few larks left for them to practice upon, with now and then a solitary rabbit in a hedgerow, who has been shot at too often to venture out except at midnight. This scarcity of game in the unpreserved districts compels them, much against their will, to intrude upon the neighbouring preserves, and to resort to all manner of tricks to elude the vigilance of the keepers and their employers.

Sometimes this is effected by driving up to the cover-side, having a pull right and left at the pheasants, and driving off before the keeper can get to the spot. Sometimes by sneaking into cover without a dog, going directly to the barley-rick, where the birds are fed, and after bagging a brace, lying quietly in a ditch, or up in a thick tree, until the search is over. At other times it is necessary to bribe the keeper, and if he is too conscientious to accept the offer, to give him a false name, or the governor's

certificate, and if that won't do, to give him, which he must take, a sound threshing, and then run for their lives. One or other of these plans generally answers.

Some of the uninitiated may ask if shooting is allowed by the authorities of the university. The statute "*De armis non gestandis*," expressly forbids "*intra universitatis ambitum*," "the carrying of arms, either offensive or defensive, such as swords, daggers, little dittos, commonly called stilettoes, skeans, bows and arrows, *bombardus* (what they are even Ainsworth did not know, as he has left the word out of his dictionary) either by day or night, except on a journey to or from Oxford, under the penalty of being fined two shillings to the university." The same statute, however, allows the members to carry bows and arrows, "*honestæ recreationis causâ*," which is doubtless the origin of the archery meetings which are now held in the gardens of those colleges which are fortunate enough to have these delightful appendages.

As these statutes were written before the days of Friar Bacon, who invented gunpowder, and

lived at or upon Grandpont (the bridge at the bottom of St. Aldgates) and have not been materially altered since Friar Bacon's time, no mention is made of cannons, (excepting those of Christ Church) guns, pistols, or pistolets — the use of them is therefore allowed, or at least winked at, which is the same thing, "*honestæ recreationis causâ*," in lieu of the bow and arrow, the use of which is confined to a few very fine men, who like to attitudinize and shew off their figures before the ladies.

Archery meetings, I allow, are very pleasant things for bringing people together to eat and drink in a tent, lounge about prettily laid-out grounds, and finish the evening with a dance ; but it puts me in an awful rage to see a great, strapping, full-grown fellow with a diminutive bow in his hand, fancying himself Robin Hood, because he happens to have on a Spanish hat and feathers, a suit of Lincoln green, with a "quiver full of arrows" at his back, a delicate white kid glove on one hand, and a thing like three tailor's thimbles on the other, to prevent his tender fingers being hurt by the sting ! I

say it puts me in a passion to see this archer — toxophilite, I beg pardon—after putting himself into the most approved position, and with difficulty sending forty or fifty little arrows, not clothyard shafts, eighty or ninety yards, some to the right, and others to the left, to the danger of his surrounding admirers — receive the congratulations of his friends, and a silver bauble from the hand of some beautiful girl, for having, by great good luck, put *one* arrow out of the lot into some part of a target, six feet in diameter. But I am wandering as far from my subject as toxophilites' arrows do from the mark at which they are aimed.

Mr. Nathan Nevermiss, the hero of this tale, —he shall be his own historian, when I have properly introduced and described him,— was a fellow commoner of St. Mark's College, and a constant visitor in our common room, where his agreeable manners, witty conversation, and vocal powers, rendered him an acceptable guest. In person he was tall and thin, with a face that would have made a comedian's fortune — it was naturally so very ugly ; and he had increased

its ugliness by screwing it up into a wrinkled cumulus, in his efforts to remedy the short-sightedness with which he was so much afflicted, as to be obliged at last to wear spectacles constantly. He was never seen to smile, even at his own jokes, though they threw all his friends into convulsions. His laugh, if it could be called such, was a sepulchral oh ! hah ! which issued from his chest without any sympathetic movement of the muscles of his face. His whole appearance indicated ill health and bodily weakness, so much so indeed, that a Wiltshire farmer, who was travelling with him one very windy day, on the outside of a coach, overcome by his humane feelings, said to him, “ Put down thy umberelly, lad, or thee’lt be blawed right ath’ert that volla veild.” But appearances, in his case as in many others, were deceitful : he was one of the most powerful men of his day, and had never cost his parents a shilling for physick since he was inoculated and got over the measles and hooping-cough. He used to amuse his friends by tying a kitchen-poker round his neck, lifting two half-hundred weights, and knocking them

together over his head, and other feats of strength; his hands, though thin and bony, were so very strong that he could crush a pewter measure with ease, and could have strangled the American sea-serpent if he had been lucky enough to get him within his grasp.

As a proof of his powers of compression, I will relate an anecdote which I heard from one of his friends.

As they were walking along Fleet Street, arm-in-arm, they observed a very suspicious-looking character dodging them, and at last, as they stopped to look in at a print-shop, endeavouring to extract their handkerchiefs. "Wait a minute," said Nathan, "I'll have him." They moved on, and the pickpocket, taking advantage of a favourable rush of passengers, put his hand into Nathan's coat-pocket. He seized it immediately, and in spite of all the fellow's exertions to release himself, held him as in a blacksmith's vice.

"Let me go, sir—pray let me go! I'll never again—oh—oh—pray, sir!" and the fellow roared so loudly, and performed so many extra-

ordinary gyrations, as to attract a large crowd, who could not tell what to make of it. Nathan, however, walked on very quietly, increasing the strength of his grasp, until he dragged the man, now pale with pain, and utterly unable to do any thing but groan, through Temple Bar, and into the first apothecary's shop he saw, where he released him, and pulling out half-a-crown, laid it on the counter, and coolly requested Mr. Bolus "to give that poor fellow a lotion."

Mr. Bolus kindly inquired how he was hurt.

"How? Why I presume he has left his own pocket-handkerchief at home, and in trying to borrow mine, my rascally tailor has made the pocket so small, that he has crushed his hand in attempting to get it out again." The thief had fainted from excess of agony.

I shall relate one other circumstance as a proof of his great bodily strength and courage, which created a great sensation at the time it happened, not only in Oxford, but in the surrounding neighbourhood.

He had walked over to a village, about two miles from Oxford, to dine with a friend who

had taken lodgings there for the vacation, and when night came, the darkness was so intense, that every effort was made to induce him to sleep there, and return to Oxford in the morning, but in vain. He laughed at the idea of the danger of falling into a ditch or the hands of robbers, and set out by the nearest cut across the fields. He found his way with difficulty, and was congratulating himself on reaching the last gate, which opened into the turnpike-road within half a mile of the town, when he heard the voices of three men in conversation. He supposed, however, that they were merely labourers returning to their homes after indulging to rather a late hour at some public-house ; he therefore leaped the gate, and saying " good night," passed quickly by them.

It was still dark, but his eyes having become accustomed to the darkness, he could just see that one of the three was a very tall, stout man, and the other two much shorter, and that all were dressed as bargemen usually are.

At that period there was only one house in this part of the suburbs ; it stood in a walled garden,

and divided the turnpike-road from the footpath. Thinking it would be lighter in the road than on the path, he turned back and passed the men again, intending to go round the wall, at the corner of which they were now standing, but as he passed them he was knocked violently against the wall by a blow from behind. He turned round, and saw the stoutest man in the act of repeating the blow, but he warded it off, and knocked him down: the other two then came upon him. He kept them at bay by striking at them, and retreating to the gate over which he had jumped into the turnpike-road, intending if possible to leap over it again, and trust to his legs and the darkness for his escape. Before he could accomplish this, the stoutest man again came up, and seizing a large stone from a heap placed near for the repair of the roads, hurled it at him with such force as to knock him backwards into a deep but dry ditch. The ruffian threw himself upon him, and seizing him by the neckcloth tried to strangle him with one hand, and to tear out his watch with the other, his two companions looking on and with dreadful

oaths and imprecations urging him to murder him.

In this dreadful strait his presence of mind did not forsake him, but lifting the fellow with his left elbow he contrived to take his penknife from his waistcoat-pocket with his right hand and to open it. "He could," as he said, "have ripped the fellow up, but had not the heart to kill a fellow-creature." He, however, drew the knife sharply across his wrist, and divided all the tendons of the hand which was grasping his throat. The fellow gave a sharp, shrill cry, and fell over him as though he had fainted. As no time was to be lost, he sprung to his feet, and seizing the stone with which he had been assailed, ran at the nearest of the two men who were still on the bank, and felled him to the ground. The third man fled towards Oxford, and Nathan pursued him some yards, but, in trying to follow him over a stile which led into the fields to the left, he found himself too weak from the loss of blood which was still pouring from his nose and mouth. Thinking the other two might again attack him, he staggered on as

well as he could to the turnpike-gate, and knocked the gatekeeper up.

They obtained the assistance of the watchman, and returned with lanterns to the scene of the outrage, but found no traces of the perpetrators. In the ditch, however, was a large pool of blood, which must have flowed from the wrist of the wounded man.

We had in Oxford, at that time, a very clever police-officer, called Jack Smith ; Mr. Nathan went to his house, and knocking him up informed him of the circumstances, described the men as well as he could, and then retired to bed.

In the morning, Jack rose before daylight, and went to all the houses in St. Thomas's parish, where the bargemen generally lodge, but could not find the men he sought. He learnt, however, at the canal wharf, that a boat had left at daybreak for Banbury, with two men on board, and another driving the horse. The description of the captain tallied exactly with that given to him of the tallest and stoutest of the three, and his suspicions of his being the man he "wanted" were confirmed by hearing that he had asked a

bystander to "cast off the rope for him, for he had hurt his left hand."

Without explaining the reasons for his inquiries, lest a hint should be given to his men, he went to Mr. Nathan's rooms, and, after a hearty breakfast, drove him to Banbury. They left their gig in the town, and walked down to the house by the canal side, where the bargemen resorted, and, under pretence of asking about a boat-load of timber which they expected, sat down in the little parlour and called for refreshments.

After waiting some hours, a boat came in, and a tall, stout man, with his left hand tied up in a handkerchief, came on shore, and walked into the taproom. Jack followed him, and telling him he wanted to speak with him a minute in the passage, asked him, "How he came to knock the gentleman about so last night, as well as robbing him of his watch?"

"Knocked him about," said the man, taken by surprise and thrown off his guard, "I wish I had murdered him, for he has maimed me for life."

This was quite enough for Jack. His prisoner

was handcuffed, and in Oxford gaol, within four hours from the time he was taken; the other two were also secured.

At the ensuing assizes all were found guilty. Two were transported, and the stout man sentenced to death, and left for execution, without a prospect of respite or reprieve.

Nathan, though he knew the sentence was a just one, and the punishment deserved, "had not the heart" to be the cause of the premature death of any one — even of a man who had had no mercy on him. He sent up memorials and petitions to the Home Secretary, but without effect. He then went up to town and requested a personal interview, which was granted. The result, however, was the same; no mercy could be extended in such a case. A second and a third interview were granted him; and so intense was the agony he displayed, and so earnest were his prayers for mercy on the criminal for *his* sake, that the secretary at length yielded to his entreaties, and he returned to Oxford with the document which commuted the sentence to transportation for life.

Had he failed, and the man been hanged, there is but little doubt he would have been in a lunatic asylum for the rest of his days. Such was Mr. Nathan Nevermiss in the serious scenes of life.

“In war a lion, but in peace a lamb.”

One evening, as he was sitting in the common-room, entertaining the company as usual with his jests and tales, and making every body laugh but himself, which made them laugh ten times more, the subject of shooting came on the *tapis*, and at the request of one of the party he told the following tale.

“I was always very fond of shooting, and so I am now, but not nearly so madly attached to it as I was. A newly-married man is generally very sweet upon his wife for the first month or two—but somehow or another the heat of this attachment cools down by degrees. My double-barrel gun was my wife—made by Dupe. It was a tinderbox of course, for percussions were not invented then. I did love her dearly. She was seldom out of my arms. With her in my hand I was happy, though it could not be called

single blessedness. Like all human wives, if I *overloaded* her with kindness she was apt to kick, and like some of them had a way of ‘*going off*’ in another man’s arms,’ as readily as in my own; though when she had done so she did not wait for the newspapers to publish the affair, but gave the *report* of it herself. She *was* a beauty. I can truly say I was wedded to her, and what is more than some husbands can say, kept her in such good order that she never ran *rusty* — oh! oh! hah!

“During the last three or four days of August I was always diligently employed in screwing and unscrewing, oiling and wiping the locks and barrels — polishing the stock — selecting flints and agates — cutting out stamps — drying powder and measuring out shot — selecting and greasing boots and shoes — examining jackets and gaiters—in fact, seeing over and over again that every thing was ready for ‘the first.’

“I had a dog then, called Don; an old Spanish pointer, with a coarse short stern, and a face with a nose like a nigger’s, slit in two. He combined in his person, which was somewhat of

the largest, all the qualifications of pointer, spaniel, water-dog, and retriever — I might add greyhound, or rather lurcher, for if he came upon a hare in a furze-bush, or a bit of short cover, he was pretty nearly sure to pounce upon her before she could get many yards from him. He never attempted this, however, unless she started before I could come up within shot. One other virtue I must not omit — for he was more celebrated for that than any of his sporting qualities ; — he was the greatest and most successful thief that ever lived. Our college cook used to hate the sight of him ; for he would slip into the kitchen, get under the dresser, and watch his every movement ; and the moment poor Coquus's back was turned, seize upon a loin of lamb or mutton, or indeed any joint within his reach, for he was not particular, and run off as hard as he could scamper — sometimes with an additional *tail* behind him, consisting of the cook, cook's mates, scullery wenches, and half a dozen of the scout's boys, armed with the readiest missiles ; the pursuit was useless if he once got clear of the gates and the porter's whip, and the four

or five pounds of meat was put down in my bat-tels at ten or twelve pounds, and I was fined five shillings for letting my dog come into college.

“ As for sleeping a wink on the night of the last day of August, without dreaming of what was to happen the next day, was out of the question ; the moment I had closed my eyes there I was in a turnip-field, old Don beating about, and brushing the heavy dew off the leaves as he bounded along ; all of a sudden down he dropped — his tail as stiff as a poker, and his head a little turned towards me, winking at me with one eye, as much as to say, ‘ here they are, master, come up ;’ then I would try to walk up, but my feet refused to leave the spot, or perhaps if I did walk up, and spring the birds, I could not get my gun off, though I pulled and pulled as hard as I could. Sometimes the hammers would go down as gently as if the spring was broken ; at others, the report was not louder than an air-gun’s, and I could see the shot skim gently through the air, and hit the birds without hurting them in the least. To dream that I had left powder-flask, shot-belt,

or some other requisite behind me, after walking six miles to the ground, was a very common occurrence ; and old Don was often transformed into a pig or a sheep, and the partridges into tame ducks or fowls, and sometimes into harpies, with the faces of my father and mother, and the rest of the family, watching my proceedings with their spectacles on. I would turn, and turn again, but it was of no avail ; the instant sleep returned, some annoying or ridiculous vision would present itself to my ‘ mind’s eye ;’ and I rose feverish and unrefreshed long before daylight, dressed in the dark, and groping my way to old Don’s kennel, started off and sat upon the gate of the field I had marked out for the commencement of my beat, until the sun rose, and I could begin the slaughter according to Act of Parliament. Many such nights have I passed when a *young* sportsman.

“ We, that is I and old Don, were pretty well known within twenty miles of Oxford. As I never was a pot-hunter, and cared nothing about the game after it was killed, and generally made a point of feeing the farmers’ men pretty libe-

rally, and joked and laughed with every body I met—I often got a day or two's shooting where other men failed. The keepers, too, would sometimes request me to assist them in making up a basket of game for presents; and a pound of tobacco, and a gross of pipes, has insured me the entire shooting of a farm for the season. Somehow I managed to go out somewhere every day.

“ One day I received a note, rather a dirty one, from the keeper of Lord —, who lived about eleven miles from Oxford; it ran thus :

“ ‘ Sur,

“ ‘ Oblig me by kummin over the day after nex. I wants to kill a hep of gam. Master's oldest sun's going to stan for M.P., and I'm to guv all the lectors as will vote for us, a basket of gam. You nos our manners—kum cross lore farm, and shut all you sees in your rode.

“ ‘ Your obedent Survunt,

“ ‘ LONG TOM.

“ ‘ P.S. Kum arly, and the onder kipper will git brekfist reddy.’

“ As his lordship’s manors were well stocked with game, I did not hesitate a moment about accepting Long Tom’s invitation, and started on foot as soon as it was light, with old Don. I kept the turnpike-road for about five miles, and then turned into a stubble-field, and made my way across the country for three or four miles, as straight as I could for the lower farm. I got two or three shots as I walked along, and had just marked a fine covey into a bit of Swedes, and was going through the gateway to kill two or three brace of them, when I was interrupted by a tall, strapping, keeper-looking fellow, who opened the negotiation in a loud blustering tone, by inquiring,

“ ‘ Who gin you toleration to shoot here?’—
‘ What’s that to you?’ I replied, walking up to old Don, who was standing the birds I had marked down.

“ ‘ Who gin you toleration to shoot here, I say?’ was repeated in so loud a tone, that whurrh! whurrh! rose the birds, and bang, bang went my Dupe. I had pocketed the brace, and was loading again, when Snob, who

from instinct had waited to mark the rest of the covey, resumed his remarks.

“ ‘ Do you know as you’re a trespassing ? I’ll just trouble you for your name and ’tificate. I’ll lay an inflammation agin you.’

“ ‘ If,’ said I, ‘ you ’ll show me your authority, you shall know all about it.’

“ ‘ ’Thority ! — d— ’thority ! — I am keeper here.’

“ ‘ So any other fool may tell me, but I ’m not obliged to believe him — show me your deputation, and I ’ll show you my certificate,’ I added, walking on my way after the birds. Snob walked alongside, and, after a great many strong remarks, which will not bear repeating, placed his great person between me and the stile, over which I was going to climb into the adjoining field, and told me, with an oath, of course, that ‘ I should not go a step further unless I showed him my ’tificate, or gave him my name.’

“ I don’t choose to be *bullied* into any thing, so I politely and positively declined.

“ ‘ Then I ’ll be — if I don’t take your gun !’ said he, coming towards me.

“ ‘Stand back,’ cried I; ‘if you dare to touch me or the gun I’ll shoot you,’ and the *click, click*, as I cocked both barrels, made him turn as pale as death, and hesitate to attack me.

“ ‘You cowardly, wizenfaced, scraggy-looking skeleton, if it was not for thy loaded gun there, I’d give thee a sound thrashing.’

“ ‘You would?’ said I.

“ ‘Do thee just put thy gun down and try.’

“I fired off both barrels into the air, and laid the gun down, telling old Don to ‘mind it,’ and, taking off my spectacles and coat, said to him:—

“ ‘Now, you great overgrown bully, pull off your jacket, and I’ll teach you a lesson in civility you will not soon forget.’

“The contest did not last very long. He swung his great powerful arms about like the sails of a windmill, and, had he hit me, would probably have stunned me; but I hit straight at his head, and sprung back from his blows until I had reduced him to my own strength, then I closed with him, and got his bullet-shaped head under my arm, which I pummelled until I was

tired, and then threw him from me. He fell completely beaten, and for a time unable to move. At length he rose, and, wiping the blood from his face, said, with a most vindictive grin,

“ ‘I’ll have thee up for this—here’s my deputation.’ ”

“ ‘And here,’ said I, ‘is my certificate, if you can read it.’ ”

“ ‘He took it, and with the one eye which was not closed by my fist, read, ‘Nathan Nevermiss, St. Mark’s Coll. Oxford,’ and exclaimed,

“ ‘Well, if this is n’t a pretty go. You’re the very gen’leman as Long Tom sent me to meet, and I’ve got breakfast ready for you in my cottage ; but you’re not the least like —’ ”

“ ‘The gentleman you expected to meet,’ interrupted I ; ‘but if you had only been civil instead of trying to bully me, you would have saved yourself a sound beating, and me a great deal of unnecessary exertion.’ ”

“ ‘I humbly beg your pardon, sir, and if you’ll do me a favour you’ll oblige me ; don’t tell any body as you whopp’d me so, or I shall never hear the last of it — but ’specially my

missus, or she 'd whop me too. I'll tell her I tumbled and fell with my face on 'a stump.'

"I consented to keep the matter a secret, and walked to his cottage, where I found Long Tom and an excellent breakfast waiting for me.

"We were joined by two neighbouring farmers, and as the hares and pheasants were abundant, we killed enough in two or three hours to supply all the 'lectors in the county. It was downright murder, and more like killing tame fowls and sheep than *feræ naturæ*; nothing like sport in it—human spaniels with sticks in their hands to put up the game instead of the exciting music of the dogs. I was quite sick of it, and as I had a little plan of my own to execute in my way back, I declined a very hearty invitation to dine with the farmers, and set out on my return.

"In my route lay a snug cover of sixty or seventy acres full of game. It belonged to a man, who, in his younger days, had been a tradesman in Oxford, and one of the greatest poachers that ever lived; but by the death of a relative he had come into a considerable pro-

perty, of which the farm on which this cover stood formed a part.

“He was a low-bred, nasty-tempered individual, but his money had the usual effect of making him what is called a country-gentleman, and a county magistrate. As soon as he became a beak he showed his talons, and had spring-guns, steel-traps, and spikes, set all over his estates ; would not allow a cur of any kind to be kept by a tenant or cottager, and sent every man to prison whom he suspected of wiring a hare, or trapping a rabbit. He shot all the foxes in his covers, and spiked the gapways and gates, to prevent the hounds coming upon his grounds, and allowed no one a day’s sporting of any kind. The game that he killed he sent up to London, exchanging it for wine and fish, and kept all his servants on rabbits, until they nauseated the very sight of a scut.

“It is needless to say he was not a popular character. I owed him a grudge for having threatened to exchequer me for following a wounded bird, and picking it up on his land. He did not know me by sight, only by name ; and I now re-

solved to put in execution a plan that I had formed some time before. I walked boldly up to his house and rung the hall-bell as loudly as I could. The bailiff, who lived in the back part of the mansion, came with marks of alarm on his face, and dinner in his mouth, to see what so unusually loud an application of the bell-rope could mean.

“ ‘ Is Mr. Tapes at home ?’

“ ‘ No, sir.’

“ So I suspected, and it was just what I wanted.

“ ‘ Is he gone to Oxford ?’

“ ‘ Yes, sir, and will not be home until dinner.’

“ ‘ Could I speak with Mr. Scrape, the bailiff ?’

“ ‘ I ’m Mr. Scrape, sir.’

“ ‘ Oh ! then,’ continued I, ‘ that is lucky. I have a letter to deliver to Mr. Tapes or yourself.’

“ This letter I had prepared some time before—it was a regular forgery, and purported to be written by an attorney in Oxford, who was supposed to be so deep in Mr. Tapes’s secrets as to have him completely under his thumb.

One of his clerks wrote it, and was even then so successful in copying his master's hand, that no one could detect the imposition ; and so much more so, afterwards, that he got £500 out of the banker's hands by a forged check, and escaped to America with the amount.

“ Mr. Scrape read and examined the letter minutely. The contents surprised him, as he was peremptorily ordered, in the absence of his master, to show me an hour or two's shooting in the thickest part of his preserves, alleging, as a reason for so unusual a proceeding, that he was under considerable obligations to my father.

“ Mr. Scrape seemed puzzled how to act. He could not doubt the genuineness of the document, and knew that his master did not dare to refuse any request that his lawyer made to him. Seeing his hesitation, I told him that my time was but short, and I should feel obliged by his giving me some luncheon while he summoned the keeper, and, without waiting for his answer, showed myself into a back room, through the open door of which I saw a table with a whity-brown table-cloth, and some dishes upon it.

“ ‘I ’ll trouble you,’ said I, sitting down and helping myself to some rabbit-pie, and old Don to a large piece of bacon, ‘for a very large mug of very cold pump water and some brandy; or, if you’ve none at hand, a bottle of sherry will do.’

“Mr. Scrape said, ‘he really was—very much surprised — very sorry—very glad — wished his master was at home — was sorry he was out;’ but, seeing me progressing coolly with my lunch, and not at all disposed to yield my point, he left the room, and returned with a bottle of very good sherry. When I had finished it and my meal, I informed him I was quite ready, and, taking up my gun, walked out directly for the cover; Mr. Scrape following and talking to himself.

“ ‘Oh dear! oh dear! what shall I do?’

“ ‘Do?’ said I, ‘unlock that gate, and take care and leave it unlocked. As the keeper is not here, I and my old dog shall do very well.’

“Mr. Scrape hesitated, and wished I would but wait till his master came home. He would be home punctually at five, and I should have an

hour's sport then—he never allowed any one to go into the cover. My only reply was opening the gate and letting fly right and left at two fine cock pheasants that old Don had flushed, and begging Mr. Scrape to have the goodness to pick them up for me.

“The report of the gun, as I suspected it would, brought the keeper and two assistants to the spot.

“‘Mr. Scrape, I need not detain you any longer—I am obliged by your accompanying me thus far. Keeper, send away your dogs and men; you will be quite enough here.’ And I walked on, and banged away at hares and pheasants as fast as I could load and fire, leaving the keeper and Mr. Scrape to talk over so unusual a circumstance. The keeper, when he had done his consultation, followed me, and very civilly begged to see my certificate—I gave him the document, which I knew he could not read—for I had taken care to ascertain the fact.

“‘Your name is, I see, sir ——?’

“‘Yes,’ said I, nodding; ‘you see—Snugs, of St. Paul’s College—it’s all right—if you come

into Oxford, pray call and take some refreshments in my name — you'll not forget it — Snugs, of St. Paul's,' and I returned the licence into my pocket-book.

“The man showed his wisdom, by scratching his head, and making me a bow, saying, ‘Well! how master could ever think of letting you or any body come a-shooting here, I can’t think.’

“‘Your master,’ I replied, ‘is a very liberal man, I’m told, and nothing gives him so much pleasure as showing his friends sport, when they come to see him.’

“‘Ees—when they *do* come to see him.’

“I could not afford to lose any time, so I went on shooting, and very soon killed four or five brace of hares, and eight or ten of pheasants. I told the keeper I was quite satisfied, and begged him to thank his master in my name, and to assure him of my regret at not finding him at home to receive me.

“‘Thee isn’t going to take away all the game?’

“‘The game!—decidedly—all I can carry—

I am sure your master, if he was at home, would be glad ——’

“ ‘Then he is at home—for there’s his voice,’ cried the keeper, as a loud ‘hilloh ! hilloh !’ reached his ears.

“ ‘That your master’s voice?’ said I, apparently much pleased ; ‘run instantly, and tell him I ’m delighted he ’s returned.’

“ Away went the keeper, and away went I — in a contrary direction, as fast as four brace of pheasants, which I had managed to cram into my pockets, would allow me, leaving the rest of the game for my host. I knew, if I could once get clear out of cover, I could beat them all at a run — but how to get out was the question, as the gates and palings were all spiked. I tried a *ruse*, an artful dodge, which answered very well. I called old Don to heel, and, giving him a sign to keep close, doubled upon my pursuers, whose voices I could just hear, and, turning down the cover, by a ride which ran parallel to the one by which they were going to meet me, as they thought, threw myself flat upon my face, at the

bottom of a thick thorn-bush, and lay close until they had passed.

“ Though they could not see me, I could see and hear them distinctly ; there was Mr. Tapes, and the very lawyer, whose name I had just taken the liberty of using, Mr. Scrape, and the keeper, with his two assistants, and a groom, leading the two nags, from which the host and his attorney had just dismounted.

“ Mr. Tapes was red with rage, the attorney still redder. Mr. Scrape and the keeper were excusing themselves in the best way they could, and the groom was winking at the two under-keepers, and applying his thumb in a peculiar way to his nose with his fingers distended, plainly meaning, ‘ this is fun.’

“ ‘ To dare to forge my name,’ said the lawyer.

“ ‘ To dare to drink my sherry,’ said Mr Tapes.

“ ‘ And eat the rabbit-pie,’ said Scrape.

“ ‘ To kill ten brace of pheasants,’ said the keeper.

“ ‘ I’ll hang him for forgery,’ continued the lawyer.

“ ‘I ’ll prosecute him for poaching,’ said Mr. Tapes—‘ what ’s his name?’

“ ‘ Snugs,’ replied the keeper,

“ ‘ Don,’ replied Mr. Scrape.

“ ‘ Don’t you wish you may catch him?’ said the groom to the under-keepers.

“ I had heard quite enough to convince me I should get into trouble if I was caught ; I therefore started the minute they were out of my sight, and ran as hard as I could for nearly a mile. I then pulled up, and, looking round me, and seeing nothing to indicate a pursuit, congratulated myself on having escaped, and walked on at an easy pace, planning with myself how I should evade the inquiries that would certainly be set on foot.

“ In the midst of my cogitations I was interrupted by a loud but distant shout, and looking round, saw Mr. Scrape on a pony, and the two under-keepers, about a quarter of a mile behind me, evidently on my trail. I knew I could beat the men in running, but the pony was four to two—legs I mean—against me.

“ I laid a trap for Mr. Scrape. I ran boldly

out across the middle of a grass field, at the top of my speed, and made for a gap I saw in the fence opposite me ; I jumped through, and stood quite still on the other side. Mr. Scrape gave a loud view hilloh ! and galloped after me, leaving his two attendants behind him, and most gallantly rammed his pony over the ditch where I was standing. I caught the bridle, and, turning him short round, succeeded in unseating his rider so far, that a gentle application of my hand to the sole of his boot threw him out of the saddle on to the ground. I mounted in his stead, and whistling to Don, went off as hard as the pony could carry me, until I thought I was fairly out of danger of my enemies, and had sundry misgivings about being taken up for horse-stealing.

“ I rode to the nearest public, and gave a boy sixpence to ride the pony home with my compliments to his master and thanks for the loan of him. The landlord of this house was an old sportsman, and we were very well acquainted ; I therefore told him of my adventures, which amused him very much ; and as Tapes was a

very bitter enemy of his, he readily promised secrecy as to my name and college, and relieved me of my anxiety about getting back to Oxford undiscovered, by putting his horse into a light cart, and driving me, by a roundabout road, home to our college gates.

“ On the following morning, I confess I was very anxious to know if any and what inquiries or proceedings had been instituted ; but was afraid to venture out lest I should meet some of the parties. My appearance is rather peculiar, hoh ! hoh ! hah ! so I sent my scout down to St. Paul’s College to act as scout, and learn the tactics of the enemy.

“ Mr. Scrape and the keeper had both been to inquire of the porter if a Mr. Snugs was there, and had described my personal appearance so accurately that no one who had ever seen me could mistake me. The porter, however, was too old a stager to betray me, and the bailiff and keeper returned as wise as they came.

“ I took the advice of my scout and altered my usual dress, and by cutting off my whiskers,

and substituting an eye-glass for my spectacles, looked a very different character. Still I was very uneasy ; I did not so much fear the wrath of Mr. Tapes as that of his attorney, and turned over in my mind every plan I could think of for deprecating his anger ; but without success, until I fortunately recollected that one of our men who happened to be up was intimately acquainted with him. I called upon him, and told him of my impudent conduct of the day before, and of my fears of the result of it.

“ After listening to and laughing at my tale — for somehow every body laughs at me — he very goodnaturedly promised to set matters straight before night.

“ About seven in the evening, I received a message from him begging me to come over to his rooms. I went, and to my great surprise was formally introduced to the attorney by my real name, which he did not seem to recognize. He was already up to the degree of “ Merry,” from the wine he had drunk, and we pushed the bottle round so rapidly, and drank so many irresistible toasts, that he got boisterous in his mirth.

I told him all my old anecdotes which were new to him, and sung him three or four comic songs, which pleased him so much that he shook me warmly by the hand, and assured me that he should be proud to know more of me, and to render me any assistance at any time that lay in his power.

“ ‘ My good sir,’ said I, ‘ I stand in need of your professional aid at this moment.’

“ ‘ I’m sorry—that is—glad to hear it—command my services ; but what’s the crime ?’

“ ‘ Forgery.’

“ ‘ Good heavens ! forgery ! On whom ?’

“ ‘ Yourself,’ and I told him in as amusing a way as I could every thing that had occurred at Tape Hall.

“ He tried to look serious but could not, and after laughing heartily, promised to relieve me from all anxiety, if I would *merely* tell him who had imitated his writing so closely that he himself could not tell whether it was his own or not.

“ This I respectfully and firmly declined doing, as it might be prejudicial to another’s

interests. At last he freely forgave me, and engaged to give me a note to old Tapes, which would prevent his instituting any proceedings against me.

“ He kept his promise, and with the note which he had written for me, I rode over to Tape Hall and found the owner at home.

“ Mr. Scrape, who opened the door to me, knew me in spite of my disguise, and chuckled to think I should pay for the rabbit-pie and his tumble.

“ ‘ Mr. Scrape,’ said I, ‘ here is a real note, not a forged one, for your master.’

“ He slammed the door in my face, but returned in a few minutes, and in a very humble tone desired me to walk in.

“ I found Mr. Tapes evidently in a bad humour at being compelled to pardon so grievous an offender as myself, but I brought him into a good humour at last, by flattering him on his merits as a country gentleman, and a county magistrate, and by expressing a wish to repay his hospitality of the day before, by giving him a return bottle of sherry in college.

“ A sovereign to the keeper and his subs made them so very polite that they hinted at ‘ my having another chance at the pheasants when I knew their master was out.’ ”

CHAPTER VI.

“AND what,” said the vice-principal, “did the letter and parcel contain?”

“That,” said the Bursar, “is at present a mystery.”

“And so it seems likely to remain,” said Broome; “after quoting these words from my No. I. you ought to have explained the mystery in No. II., Mr. Priggins, if you had any *gumption* in you; but you seem to treat the public very coolly, and ramble about, first to hunting, then to boating, then to shooting, and then to great-go parties, without any sort of order or arrangement.”

“Yes,” said Dusterly, “he’s as herratic as *Boots*.”

“*Boots*,” cried I, never having heard the simile before, “what *can* you mean by that figure of speech?”

“ Figger ? why hi intends to hintimate that you wanders habout jist like that figger of the gentleman has one sees in the evens of a bright night, hall kivered over with stars, and in the picter books of hasteronomy — don’t they call im *boots* ?”

“ Oh !” said I, smiling in spite of myself, “ I presume you mean *Bootes*—the constellation ?”

“ You may call im Bo-o-tes, or what you please—hi calls im Boots, jist has hi calls this,” pointing to the tankard, “ *beer*, and not *be-er*,” replied Dusterly, evidently offended at my questioning the correctness of his pronounciation as he calls it. “ You hought to be auled hover the coals, h afore you gets hinto an abit of being so dilatory.”

“ Read that,” said I, indignantly throwing down before Broome the Number of the *N. M. M.* which contains my No. I.

“ Read hit hout,” suggested Dusterly.

Broome obeyed, and read thus : “ I mean, as sayings and doings occur to me, to note those which may be published without hurting the feelings of any individual—without any order or

arrangement. Like the Irish beggar, I shan't ' wait to *pick* them, but take them *as they come*.' ”

“ That's hall very well,” remarked Dusterly, “ but hif we ad hadopted that here plan with hour master's rooms, hi'm hof hopinion we should ave got ‘ the *sack*’ long hago. Horder's hevery thing, has the vice-chancellor hused to hobserve when e went to the theaytre in procession.”

“ Yes,” replied Broome, “ and as the commercial gentleman said to his customers, ‘ much obliged for cash for last account — but an *order* is the thing I want.’ ”

“ True hagin,” cried Dusterly, “ hand what his the speaker of the ouse of commons hallays saying? Why *horder ! horder !!* to be sure.”

“ Talking of Bagmen,” said Broome, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and preparing to replenish, “ or commercial gents, as they call themselves nowadays, I will tell you an anecdote if you are inclined to listen to it.”

“ Hoh, hah ! hout with the hanicdote while you fills hagin,” cried Dusterly, “ and then it won't be ha long un.”

“ One long vacation,” commenced Broome,
“ I went to spend a few days with an old friend
of mine, who keeps a commercial house at Wit-
ney—”

“ What ! ha hinn you mean ? ha otel ?”

“ Yes—an inn, or hotel, which you please.
As we were sitting smoking our pipes in the
little bar one night, the waiter came in to say
that the ‘ gent. as travels in the leather line
would be much obliged to master if he would
allow him to take a pipe in the bar, as he was
all alone by his-self.’ My friend, the landlord,
sent ‘ his compliments, and should be delighted
to see him.’

“ In a few minutes we heard a violent alter-
cation under the window, a strange voice ex-
claiming—

“ ‘ You ought to be athamed of yourthelf,
thir ; you call yourthelf a waitther—why, thir,
I could thpit a bether !’

“ And the waiter, in a tone deprecatory ex-
pressing his sorrow for what had occurred.

“ ‘ I thall thell your mathter, thir ; you’ll
forth me to thange my houthel.’

“ The door opened, and a very little gentleman entered, apparently very angry. My friend offered him a chair, and introduced him to me as Mr. Sadly, saying, at the same time, that ‘ he was afraid something unpleasant had occurred.’

“ The little man, who certainly was one of the ugliest specimens I had seen for some time, for he was frightfully marked with the small-pox, squinted horribly, and had no palate, which caused him to lisp very much, sat down, and holding his left foot in his hand, as it rested on his right knee, said, he was ‘ thurprithed to find tho much inattenthion in tho thelebrathed a houth ; why, thir, I ordered a glath of neguth, and told that fool of a waither not to make it too thweet, and to put a thmall thlithe of lemon in it. Well, thir, the fool emptieth the moith thugar bathin into it, and athidth it from the vinegar-crueth, I’m thure of it, thir, I’m thure of it.’

“ The landlord, though he knew the statement was false, as he had manufactured the negus himself, offered to discharge the man at once.

“ ‘ No, thir, but if it occurth again I mutht change my houthe ; a bothom of brandy, if you pleathe—muth obliged, thir.’

“ My friend, after giving him his dose, and expressing his regret at what had occurred, hoped he should not lose his custom.

“ ‘ Why, thir, you thee, thir, when I’m onthe ill-uthed at a houthe I never go to that houthe again. Onthe, thir, I drove Mrs. Thadly, my wife, roundth with me one of my journieth. Well, thir, we came to Thevenelmth—Thevenelmth, in Thuthex, a very flinthy plathe, and capital for cuthing thoeth to pietheth ; I thravel with leatherth, thir, but the thrade’t h bad—billth, thir, no cath paymenth—billth at thix monthth—and then they want h them renewed ; do a little in pathenth, but my commithion, two and a half per thent don’t pay for thigarth. Well, thir, when we got to Thevenelmth, I drove in ath uthual, and gave my whip—my betht whip to the othler ; it wath a whip, thir, that I never uthe, ecthept Mrs. Thadly ith with me. Well, thir, I thaw the thingth took out of the thrap, while Mrs. Thadly went to thee the

room. I ordered thea and thoatht, and a thop, and wath very well thatithfied. Well, thir, I wenth out to give my horthe hith oatths, and while I wath thanding theeing him eath, a thaithe and four drove up, and I heard the landlord thay, Thow the ladieth into number then. Now, number then wath our thleeping-room, tho, thir, I came out and I thaid, Mith-ter King, thir, thaid I, are you thenthible of *my* having taken pothethion of number then? Well, thir, inthtead of thayng he wath thorry, and all that, he thurned up hith nothe, and thaid they were genthefolkth, and mutht have the room, and that number nineteen was good enough for uth.

“ ‘ Well, thir, I thtood thtill in amathement, and thaid, What do you mean by that, thir ?

“ ‘ Why, thaid he, you litthle inthnificant athomy, when you’re at home you thleep under the counther.

“ ‘ Now, thir, I can only thay that me and Mrs. Thadly thleep in a nithe four-poth, with dimithy curthainth and whithe tatelth ; tho I thaid, What do you mean by that, feller ? — I

called him *feller* — and I would have knocked him down, thir, but he wath thix feet high.

“ ‘ Well, thir, thayth he, if you don’t like the houthe, you may go over the way ; and tho I should, but my horth had not eath hith oatths.

“ ‘ Well, thir, we went to bed in number nineteen, and wath bit by the bugth frightful. Tho neectht morning I ordered my thrap out, and paid the bill, and had jutht theated Mrs. Thadly in her theat when the whip wath mithing — my betht whip ath I keep for Mrs. Thadly. Well, thir, we thearched high and low, and where do you think I found it? Why, thir, there wath that great thix-foot lout of a land-lord a flogging thix great large thowth round the yard with it.

“ ‘ I did not *thay* any think, but I went to the other houthe ever thinthe ; and never patheth Mither King but I turn up my nothe at him.’ ”

Broome lit his pipe.

“ Well,” said Dusterly, “ his that hall ? ”

“ That’s all,” replied Broome ; “ I merely mentioned it APPRYPO DE BOOTS.”

Dusterly did not relish the allusion to Boots, and rose and took his leave, and Broome with him. I began to consider with myself whether I had not better make the subject of this number —

SAM SMYTH'S MSS.

The readers of the *N. M. M.* may perchance recollect that our Bursar was summoned to Trevenny by Messrs. Nibson and Inkspot, and returned to Oxford, bringing with him James Jobs, a MS., and a considerable quantity of the rain from heaven.

The vice-principal and our senior tutor had often pressed the Bursar to read the MS. to them in the common-room, but something or another had always occurred to prevent his complying with their wishes.

One evening, however, when they were by themselves, and wanted a fourth to make up a rubber, as they neither of them chose to take that convenient but troublesome gentleman called *dummy* for a partner, the Bursar sent me for James Jobs, who was now regularly *installed* as groom to his old half-master, and ordered

him to go to his bureau and bring him the papers consigned to his care by his other and “better half” master.

When they were brought and James dismissed, the decanter replenished from ‘the old’ bin, the candles snuffed and the fire poked into a cheerful blaze, the Bursar, telling me that I need not go, thus began :—

“The letter is directed,” said he,

“*For the Bursar of St. Peter’s College,
Oxford, to the care of James Jobs.*”

“My dear Bursar,

“I feel a presentiment, for which I cannot account, that I shall meet with a sudden and premature death. I am not inclined to be superstitious, but I cannot divest myself of the notion that I have received certain warnings to prepare to ‘shuffle off this mortal coil.’ I do not dread death more than other men, and have but too few of the goods of this world to make me loath to leave it; yet my spirits are depressed, my mind irritable, and my body nervous and debilitated. The only relief I find is, from violent and continued exercise, or employment

in the free air of heaven. To-day I have walked several miles in visiting my poor but grateful flock : to-morrow I purpose having a long day's fishing in my little yacht."

"Poor fellow !" said the Bursar ; "this was probably written the night before the accident," and on inquiry of James Jobs, it was found to be the case.

"I have but little society here, and my limited income, which will not allow me to shew my hospitable feelings to my friends, forbids my availing myself of their kindness as often as I might, were I enabled to repay it. I have whiled away many a tedious hour by writing an account of the events which occurred to me after we parted on quitting college. I buried the cares of the present in thoughts of the past. You, I believe, are the only friend I have left, and I flatter myself with the hope that the kindly feelings which you once entertained for me have not been obliterated by time and absence. Should the event, which I dread and expect, take place, I have ordered our old servant James to place my papers and this letter

in your hands. I have only two requests to make, with which I feel certain you will comply — to pay my few debts by the sale of my furniture and books, and the paltry pittance that is due to me from my cure, and to take James into your service again for *my sake*. You will find in him, as I have done, that rare treasure, a true and faithful servant ; and now farewell ! Bestow sometimes a kindly thought on the memory of your old and attached friend,

“ SAM SMYTH.

“ Trevenny Parsonage,
Cornwall.”

As soon as the letter was read, by a very singular coincidence, the Bursar, the vice-principal, the tutor, and I, Peter Priggins, all pulled out our handkerchiefs, and began blowing our noses very violently—then the Bursar poked the fire as hard as he could—the vice-principal snuffed the candles—the tutor took a long pinch of snuff, and I rattled the glasses on the sideboard, and all four of us hemmed and hawed as if we had a fish-bone in our throats.

“ This will never do,” said the Bursar, draw-

ing his hand hastily across his eyes, "Peter, fill our glasses." I obeyed, and the "Memory of poor Sam" was drunk — the MS. unfolded, and the Bursar read as follows : —

"Many years have passed, my dear fellow, since you and I were engaged in eating tough commons, and drinking thick, muddy undergraduate port at St. Peter's; abusing tutors and dons, and venting our imprecations upon scouts and chapel-bells. I find, by the Oxford calendar, that you are still at college; and I have no doubt that as a Fellow and a Don, you see things with very different eyes now, and do not grumble so much as you were wont of yore at the amount of the Battels; seeing that, as a Bursar, you get very pretty pickings out of the men's eatables; conspiring for that purpose with, and winking at the peccabilities of, the college Coquus and Promus; a crime of which you did not use to hesitate accusing your predecessor in your undergraduate days.

"I look upon the life of a resident college Fellow to be one of the happiest to be found in any condition of society; an income to satisfy

every moderate wish—a little palace to dwell in — the best of every thing prepared without any trouble — no cares about household matters — no bother with servants—the best of society, and plenty of leisure for literary pursuits, with every facility for indulging in them that well-furnished libraries and reading-rooms can supply. Then, in the long vacation, hey for Baden-Baden, Wiesbaden, Rome, Vienna, Constantinople, or any other place, ‘where men of leisure do resort,’ and your month in London at your club without leaving any other thought behind you, but that your scout may not air your bed previously to your return, or that the common-room man may deduct some few bottles from your old and favourite bin for his own private use and enjoyment; and yet how few of you appreciate your happiness !

“Now here am I, a poor devil, with two curacies, that bring me in an income of £65 per annum, which is paid me half-yearly, like servants’ wages, by Messrs. Nibson and Inkspot, my patron’s lawyers. It is true that I have a few pounds additional now and then, when I can

touch the tender feelings of “ my uncle ” — not him of the “ three balls ” — but I have hardly enough to support myself and my one servant, and am often called upon to assist my poor hardworking parishioners, for they have no one else to look to, as Lord Rentborough, the great man of the parish, (who, in other villages, generally assists the clergyman in relieving the wants of the poor) is an absentee.

“ As to society, I have little or none except the neighbouring farmers ; a kind-hearted, hospitable class of men, but not exactly calculated to entertain and amuse a man of literary tastes and habits. I have certainly plenty of leisure for reading, if I could get books to read ; but in this distant corner of our island that is no easy matter. True that I have plenty of shooting and fishing, and a yacht to sail in ; but fond as I am of all those sports, they ‘ pall upon my senses,’ because I have no companion to share them with me. Then I am constantly annoyed by that lathy, lengthy, lout of legality, young Inkspot, to whom I’m compelled to give up half my parsonage or resign my curacy. The brute

fancies, because he writes attorney-at-law to his name, that he must be a *gentleman*, and that his company must, consequently, be agreeable to me. But I will not contrast our situations further, lest you should get too strongly attached to college, even to quit it for your rectory and a wife. I have one consolation, however — the thought that you college Fellows generally *do* marry — somewhat late in life, and make the most peevish, grumbling, discontented maritalts to be found any where in the habitable parts of the globe.”

The Bursar looked at the vice-principal, and the vice-principal at the tutor. All three shook their heads Burleighiously, and drank a glass of wine, as much as to say, “That requires washing down — it’s a crammer.” The Bursar then went on with his tale.

“I will not stop to remind you of our undergraduate days, though I could recall to your mind many scenes that you most probably have forgotten. Our entering on the same day, chumming in the same rooms, joining the same set, and sharing the same amusements, must be still

fresh in your memory. Our reading with the same tutor for our little and great goes, you cannot have forgotten ; for little Pimply Pumpkin, as we, or rather you, christened the humbug, was too remarkable a character not to be remembered.

“ I don’t know how it may be now, but certainly in our day it was no very difficult thing to get a degree, and yet almost every man thought it requisite to employ a private tutor to cram him for his examination. College lectures were certainly a farce. Do you remember our friend Long John, who used always to come to Anabasis lecture — the only one in college — with his hands begrimed with gunpowder, his legs wetted up to the knees in a snipe-bog, and his shot-belt round his waist, scarcely hidden by his commoner’s gown? I recollect perfectly his construing ο μεγας βασιλευς, ‘the great mogul ;’ καθημενος εν διφρω, ‘sitting in a ditch ;’ and μυθυσμενος, ‘being a little in liquor,’ in spite of my prompting him rightly ; and poor Pimply Pumpkin would sit and groan and mutter something that was imperfectly heard, as his voice closely

resembled the buzzing of a humble bee in a watering-pot. You have but little leisure or inducement to recall these scenes ; I have. I have sat for hours re-enacting scenes of bygone days, and wishing myself back again in our snug rooms, with Peter Priggins preparing our night-caps for us ; but I must not dwell on them longer, or you will close my papers with a full impression that I, the ‘ lively Sam Smyth,’ as you were pleased to call me, am degenerated into a dreaming old twaddler.

“ We parted with each other, if you remember, after taking our B. A.’s, and keeping our master’s term, at that ‘ city of sweet smells, Birmingham. You were on your road to Liverpool, intending to cross to Ireland, on a visit to our mutual friend Brallaghan, who had promised you ‘ the finest salmon-fishing in the world, laving out county Galway ;’ I was journeying to my fond and anxious parents, who were raised several notches in their own estimation, by having a son a Bachelor of Arts.

“ You must remember my governor, because he spent a week in Oxford, and dined with us

every day in our rooms ; but I dare say you knew little more of him than that he was a gentlemanly man — a *presentable* person ; in order to render my adventures intelligible to you, I must enter a little into his history.

“ The Smyths of Odleton, in Staffordshire, had for several generations kept the principal shop in the grocery line in that quiet and unpretending borough. Each generation added a little to the family fortune ; and when my grandfather ‘ took to the business,’ he realized, by his industry and attention, a considerable sum of money. Politics ran high in the town, and the Pittites and Foxites were so nearly matched, that at the ensuing election it was very doubtful which party would win the day. There were ten or eleven voters who were wise enough to consider that £10, £20, or £30, for their ‘ vote and interest,’ would be more successful in keeping their pots boiling, than all the fine speeches of the candidates, as to the ‘ right divine of kings,’ or the measures of ‘ reform and retrenchment.’

“ The names of these men were on my grand-

father's books, with sundry sums unliquidated underneath them. The neighbouring family, who had generally returned one of its members on the Tory interest, had given great offence in the borough, in consequence of preventing the little snobs from gathering nuts in their coppices, and not sending round the usual quantity of game; though it was strongly suspected that the keeper had converted the partridges, hares, and pheasants, into pounds, shillings, and pence, 'unbeknown' to his master, through the agency of his friend, the guard of the Oldeton mail. It was certain that he spent a great deal of money, and all his evenings at the Sun Inn, whence the mail started, and that Jem Thong, the guard, *shouldered* a basket of something every night during the shooting season.

“ Another cause of offence was that the squire's lady had imported a French maid, who was said to be a petticoat spy of Bonaparte's, though in reality she was the daughter of one of the poor *émigrés*; she was French, however, and that, in those days, was enough; for every thing French was detested, except French brandy, and

that was only tolerated because there was a difficulty in obtaining it.

“ It was fully determined that the squire had ‘ lost the confidence of his constituents,’ and, of course, should lose ‘ his seat.’ Meetings were held by both parties—the Whigs, who had secretly fomented the anger of the town against its representative, entertained sanguine hopes, that as a Tory was to ‘ go out,’ a Whig must, of course, ‘ come in.’ The corporation, who were all Tories, were determined to turn the squire out—but to have another Church-and-King-man in his stead. The only question was, *who* should be the man; and a very difficult question it was, if one may judge by the large quantity of port wine that was drunk, and the number of dinners that were eaten, before a satisfactory answer could be obtained to it.

“ The names of the leading men of the day were conned over; but every one of them was provided with a borough through private interest, and they all lived too far off to induce them to spend much money in Oldeton. The names of the country gentlemen around—their property,

talents, virtues, and vices, were canvassed ; but one was too poor and extravagant, another too rich and stingy, this was too stupid, and that too clever ; in short, some valid objection was raised against every one of them. What was to be done ?

“ The mayor consulted the town-clerk, but that functionary could not advise the mayor. More port wine, more dinners — but the knot of the difficulty remained untied, until one night one of the burgesses got rather fuddled, and in a long, snuffling, stammering speech, suggested that they should send one of their own townsmen to represent them.

“ A new idea, when they happen to meet with one, strikes most people ; and the corporation of Oldeton, unused to such a piece of luck, were delighted beyond measure, and reeled home to their respective dwellings, filled with joy and port wine.

“ Another difficulty arose the moment the old one was overcome. *Who* should be the man — was still the question.

“ ‘ Bungs, the Brewer,’ suggested one.

“ ‘Too heady and frothy,’ objected another.

“ ‘Pits, the tanner.’

“ ‘Too much bark about him—thinks more of skins and hides, than politics and poor-rates.’

“The names of Skewer the butcher, Short-weight the baker, Poisonem the apothecary, and Grindem the great miller, were as unceremoniously rejected.

“At last, the same inebriated individual who had cut the former Gordian knot, ‘*nodus tali vindice dignus*,’ strongly hiccupped forth the name of my respected and respectable grandfather, who was too much taken by surprise to have sense or wind enough to negative the motion which was carried *nem. con.* by acclamation.

“The parliament died a natural death — for the parliaments in those days were not addicted to suicide—and by the help of the ten or eleven men ‘on the books,’ who were obliged to pay their ticks, or vote for their creditor, but wisely chose the latter alternative, my Grandpère was declared to be ‘duly elected,’ and never had an hour’s quiet afterwards.

“The Whigs, of course, raised a great clamour at the degradation of being represented by a grocer, and all his mops, brooms, and other sweetmeats, were mercilessly thrown in the teeth of my worthy progenitor, who, thinking it would not sound very well when he went to ‘take the oaths and his seat,’ that the question ‘who is Job Smyth, the honourable member for Oldeton?’ should be answered by ‘only a grocer,’ resolved to put in execution a plan he had previously, but from other and higher motives, meditated. He opened a bank under the firm of Smyth and Co., though who the *Co.* were never appeared, and was announced in the list of M. P.’s as Job Smyth, Esq., banker.

“I will not trouble you with much more of his history; but I must just mention why he was one of the *silent* members of the house.

“He had often essayed to speak on the sugar duties, and had succeeded in ‘catching the eye of the speaker’ several times; but the moment he opened his mouth *vox faucibus hæsit*, which he construed his ‘tongue was glued to his palate,’ and he sat down again amid loud cries of

hear ! hear ! Upon one occasion having imbibed rather more than usual, and seeing a ‘thin house,’ he rose after a gentleman who had presented a petition, and in a hesitating tone said,

“ ‘Mr. Spea—spea—ker, I wotes as how that ‘ere petition lays on the *counter*,’

“ And sat down perfectly satisfied with the impression he had made on the house, which was convulsively laughing and ‘holding both its sides.’

“ He sat out that parliament, but the envy of his fellow-townsmen, who could not bear that one of themselves should be raised so much above the others, threw him out at the next election — he having polled exactly the eleven men who were still ‘on his books.’

“ ‘After pride cometh a fall,’ and my grandfather fell very sick, and his ‘sickness was unto death.’ Then, and then only, was he forgiven by his brother burgesses for ‘setting himself up so much above his station.’

“ My father, finding the banking business more profitable and less dirty than the grocery

trade, disposed of 'the stock and goodwill,' including the twelve painted dips, which dingle-dangled over the door, as criminals used to do in the hanging days at the Old Bailey, to intimate that the tallow trade was combined with importations from Jamaica and China, and adhered closely to the issue of dirty notes—rags, as Mr. Cobbett used to call them—and the discounting of bills, by which he realized enough to enable him to buy a country-house, and aspire to the hand of a reduced country gentleman's daughter. Then, of course, he was coined into a county magistrate, for which he was admirably fitted—never having read a law-book or an act of parliament in his life, and knowing about as much of judicial proceedings as pigs do of playing on pianofortes; still he knew as much as many of his brother magistrates, and a 'fellow feeling made them wondrous kind' towards him.

"When I was born, the family prænomen of Job was exchanged for that of my maternal grandfather, and I was christened Samuel. I was sent to the grainmar-school of Oldeton (for grammar-schools were patronized by country

gentlemen in those days (though now nothing but Eton will do for them), and obtained one of the scholarships at St. Peter's attached to the foundation.

"You know that my allowance was always liberal at college; indeed, so liberal, that, beyond the credit of the thing, I cared little about taking a degree, as it was always understood in the family arrangements, that I should 'be a gentleman;' which meant, that I should have nothing to do with trade—even in bank-notes.

"Now, though £400 per annum is considered a handsome allowance in the University, especially for a scholar, who is supposed to be a needy person, and pays no room-rent nor tuition, receiving besides some £50 per annum, still, there are facilities in Oxford for spending treble that sum. How much I spent annually I have not the least notion, as I never saw a bill until I was on the point of taking my degree and leaving Oxford. And when the bills did come in, like my grandfather's moist sugar, all of a lump, I merely looked at the sum total of each, and assured the tradesman that my governor

would settle all as soon as I went down. As it was well known that my father was a rich man, I was thanked very heartily for my ‘past favours,’ and solicited very earnestly for ‘further orders.’

“I felt quite as easy in my mind about the discharge of my *ticks* as the tradesmen did, not doubting for a moment that every thing would be paid, though I might be severely rebuked for my extravagance. Moreover, I knew that my influence with my mother and sister, who could do what they pleased with my father, was sufficient to ensure the fulfilment of my wishes.

“When I parted from you at Birmingham, and was left to my own thoughts, I cannot deny that I felt sundry misgivings as to money and time wasted, and talents — such as they were — unimproved. I also experienced some awkwardness about the method of opening the subjects of my *ticks* to the governor. I determined, however, not to be in a hurry about the matter, but to wait until some of my creditors should apply for their money. With this arrangement in my mind, I swallowed my ‘saddened thoughts,’

and sundry glasses of Staffordshire ale with Tom Whipcord, who drove the Sovereign day-coach.

“Most coachmen are communicative, and, generally speaking, well supplied with local information. Tom certainly was one of the greatest gossips that ever lived, and made a point of *pumping* every individual who sat by his side on the box, and behind him on the roof. I was, of course, on intimate terms with him, as I rode up and down by his side every term, and ‘took the ribbons’ several stages; indeed, I had often worked his coach for him to give him a week’s holiday, while I was supposed by my fond parents to be studying at Oxford.

“‘Have you heard from the governor lately, Mr. Samivel?’ he inquired, just as the horses for the last stage were put to.

“‘Not very lately; but why do you ask?’

“‘Hum!’

“‘What do you mean by hum, Tom? nothing the matter, I hope?’

“‘Why, I don’t know; Bung the brewer come down with me last journey—had the box, and gave me a shilling — a regular screw, and

intimated as much as someat was wrong with your governor.'

" 'Not stopped, I hope,' said I, thinking more, I must confess, of my Oxford duns than of my father's ailments.

" 'Oh no!—no signs of pulling up—the con-sarn's all right—but Bung's said as how he was a little queer in the head—got the megrims, I suppose, like Brown Bess, as fell going down Skidneed Hill. I can tell you how to cure 'em: cut a stick to a pint, and run it into his palate about the fourth rudge, and he'll bleed plentiful, and run as well as ever. Bess did, at any rate.'

" When Tom had kindly furnished me with this remedy he changed the subject; but I was too much alarmed to be entertained by his conversation, and was glad when I got to the end of my journey—that is, by coach.

" I knew it would be useless to go to the bank, as it would be closed, so I threw myself into a chaise, and told the boy to drive as fast as he could to Longcroft's, as our country-house was called.

" I was kindly received by my mother and

sister, and found that my fears about my father's health were but too well grounded.

“He had speculated largely and successfully in some foreign bonds, by the advice of his agents in London, and, stimulated by the hope of adding largely to his ample fortune, determined to extend his speculations. As his agents endeavoured to deter him from entering into several wild, ill-concerted schemes, he ceased to consult them, and, acting entirely upon his own knowledge of business—which was limited to country-banking—got ‘his fingers burnt,’ as the phrase is, to the tune of £20,000. This a little chilled his ardour; but some designing men, by holding out promises of very large and quick returns, induced him to risk £10,000 more in some ‘safe investment of capital,’ which proved very unsafe, and the £10,000 shared the fate of the preceding £20,000.

“These losses produced in his mind great excitement and irritability, which were increased by a letter from his former agents, declining his future favours, and begging him to transfer his account to some other house.

“ This was no easy matter, as the news of his losses and his zeal for speculation were noised about in the money-market, and it was not until he had fully satisfied his former agents of his solvency, and promised them not to engage in any further schemes without their approbation, that they consented to re-open an account with him, and to supply him with means of meeting the *run* which would be sure to be made upon him in the country. His mind, like a bow which has been strained too violently, did not recover its wonted elasticity, and the excitement under which he had suffered was succeeded, as usual, by a want of energy and lowness of spirits, which totally incapacitated him for business ; indeed, the family physician strongly urged him to retire at once, as he had realized sufficient to rank with the richest men in the county. But this advice he rejected as firmly as he did the suggestion that I should be sent for from Oxford, and, under the supervision of his old and faithful clerk Fidel, be installed at his desk, as his successor and junior partner. ‘ He had determined to make a gentleman of me, and I should never

degrade myself by presiding at a counter, or scribbling my name upon dirty one-pound notes.'

"He consented, however, to absent himself from the bank for a time, and to place an additional clerk upon the establishment, though it was found necessary to put him under *surveillance*, as he had once or twice attempted to break through this necessary arrangement.

"There lived in Oldeton, next to our banking-house, a surgeon's widow, who had an only son named Owen Kington. He was about my own age, and went to the grammar-school at the same time I did. Although we were in the same class, and joined in the same games, got into the same scrapes, and shared the same punishments, we were never intimate—or, what is called by schoolboys, friends or cronies. There was something so sly and underhanded about him, that I never could like him—he was emphatically a *sneak*. One fact will give you a better insight into his character than any description I could give of him.

"The 5th of November was always a memorable day in the free-school of Oldeton. We

had a choice of a whole holiday to go where we pleased, or a grand display of fireworks, and a bonfire in the evening ; the purchase money being made up by a subscription amongst ourselves, to which the masters gave a liberal addition. I need hardly say that our choice was invariably in favour of the fireworks, though a ' flare up ' was not a flash word in those days.

" We had subscribed, and made up, on one of these occasions, a sum of nearly £10, which was given to the captain of the school, who usually ordered and paid for the combustibles. I was with him when he counted the money, which was all in silver, excepting three guineas, which had been given us by the mayor and our two masters. I saw him lock it up carefully in the upper part of his bureau just before we went to bed on the night of the 4th. On the following morning we were sent for to the master's study, where the fireworks, which had just arrived, were deposited for safety until the evening. The man who had furnished them was waiting to be paid. Trueman, the senior boy, after seeing that the order had been properly executed, ran

across to the school-room to obtain the money, and returned in a few minutes as pale as death to say that the money was gone.

“ Dr. Bright, the head master, paid the tradesman, and dismissed him. We were then rung into school, and with closed doors a strict inquiry was set on foot as to who the thief could be. Trueman proved by me, that he had locked our money up safely the last thing the night before ; and by another boy, that he had not been near his bureau that morning. The lock was found uninjured, and it was clear that no force had been applied to undo it. All our keys were examined, but none were found at all resembling Trueman’s. Every boy who was old enough to understand the nature of an oath swore that he did not take the money, nor had the least knowledge of the person by whom it was taken. Every method, indeed, was resorted to to detect the guilty person, but without success. The servants had not been in the school-room, which was a building detached from the masters’ houses, at all that morning.

“ About a week after the money was missed,

a little fellow named Trent was observed to spend a great deal more than his allowance on cakes and tarts. Upon inquiry, it was found he had laid out fourteen shillings, for the possession of which he could not, or would not, account. He was, therefore, sent away from school with his character ruined for life.

“ I cannot tell why, but I had my suspicions that the right thief was not detected. There was something in Owen Kington’s manner that I could not make out. He was amongst the most zealous of those who sought to detect the criminal ; and his joy at little Trent’s dismissal, and the cessation of all further investigation, was so great, as to give rise to some very strong doubts in my mind whether he had not had some hand in the business himself.

“ I watched him closely, but could find nothing to confirm my suspicions. He spent a great deal of money, but not more than usual, as his mother supplied him far too liberally.

“ The year ended, and Trueman was elected off to college. I succeeded to the captainacy, and to the possession of *the* bureau.

“One day Mrs. Kington invited the sixth form boys to supper after a cricket-match on the common. We went into Owen’s room to wash our hands, and as I was examining some books and toys in the closet, I found at the back a piece of hard soap, with the deep impression of a key upon it. Without saying any thing about it, I put it into my pocket, and when I was alone, found that it corresponded exactly with the wards of the key of the bureau, now my property, whence the money had been stolen.

“On the following morning I went to Dr. Bright, and, showing him the mould, told him of my suspicions. He sent me to the blacksmith who did our little jobs for us, and the moment he saw the mould and key, he said that he had made one of that pattern about twelve months before, for Mrs. Kington’s gardener, who told him it was for a duplicate key of the greenhouse. The gardener, on being questioned privately by the doctor, confessed that Owen had given him a guinea to get it done for him, pretending it was for the boarders to let themselves out into the town with after it was dark. Owen,

on being summoned into the study, saw the soap and the key, and in the most abject and contemptible manner threw himself on his knees and confessed the facts — that he had stolen the money early in the morning of the 5th, before any of the other boys had come into school ; but before he had closed the bureau, and while he was in the act of putting the money into his pockets, little Trent had come in. To ensure his silence, he gave him fourteen shillings, and told him that, as he had received part of the stolen money, if it was ever discovered, he would certainly be hanged as a receiver. This the poor little fellow believed.

“ Dr. Bright, wisely considering that the character of his school would be risked if so heartless and disgraceful a circumstance became, as it must have done had it been known, a subject of public comment, and feeling for his widowed mother, whose stock of happiness was vested in her worthless son, resolved to remove Owen without assigning any reason for his dismissal.

“ He wrote to poor little Trent’s parents, and expressed his pleasure at being able to remove

from their breasts the painful sense they must have felt of their son's depravity. Gratifying as the establishment of his innocence was to his father and mother, it came too late for the poor boy to derive any benefit from it. In the heat of his displeasure, and without deigning to hear his explanations, his father sent him for a sailor, and ere a week had passed, he and his sorrows were buried in the 'deep, deep sea!' whether by accident or design, no one could tell.

"Deep and severe was the affliction which the discovery of Owen's villany caused to his mother. By the doctor's advice, he was sent to a distant town, and placed in the surgery of a friend of her former husband.

"Though I had not seen him since, I had heard very bad accounts of him; and his conduct was such, while he was in London for the purpose of 'walking the hospitals,' as it is called, that it was found necessary to give up all idea of his following his father's profession. He returned home, and was idling about, doing nothing but riding and horse-dealing, and mixing with the lowest characters of that low and dishonest profession.

“ I have mentioned these facts in order to give you a notion of the disgust I felt when Mr. Fidel, our old clerk, with whom I was a great pet, told me, in addition to the circumstances in which my father was placed— for my mother and sister were too much hurt to give me the information I required — that it was confidently rumoured that this very Owen Kington was paying his addresses to my sister Alethæa, and that my parents had consented to their union, on condition that the scoundrel settled down steadily to business in the bank for twelve months.

“ My mother and sister, very easy people in their way, and quite unconscious of any thing that was going on in the world, knew nothing whatever of Owen’s character. During the illness of my father, he had presumed upon his old acquaintance with them, and visited them daily. To give the brute his due, he was very handsome, of pleasing manners and address ; and what won my sister most, a good musician. He accompanied her pianoforte with his flute ; and as he was the only young man with whom she was on terms of intimacy, it is not to be won-

dered at that her simplicity made her think him a being of superior order.

“ Their mothers, too, who had been warm friends for many years, were fools enough to think, and, as mothers often do, say, that they ‘were evidently born for each other.’ My temper was sorely tried on my first interview with Kington. I hated him, and I knew our hatred was mutual. I found that he had usurped the place in the family that I had been used to occupy, ordering the servants about as though he were already their master. He assumed such an appearance of swagger and hauteur on my entrance, to overawe me, I suppose, into a certain degree of fear, if not of respect for him, that I was strongly tempted to knock him down. Nothing but old Fidel’s earnest entreaties, that I would keep my anger ‘below par,’ and a conviction that I could only thwart the designs I suspected he was meditating, by steady and calm watchfulness and caution, enabled me to subdue my exasperated feelings. I did so — though it nearly choked me.

“ With the permission of his medical attendant,

I had an interview with my poor father on the morning after my arrival. I was astonished and shocked to see the alteration a few months had made in his appearance. It was not that his body was much attenuated, which struck me most, but that from a fine, cheerful, middle-aged man, he had suddenly become what the Grecian dramatist terms a *γερων τυμβος*, an old man on the brink of the grave. His hair was changed from black to white — not grey ; the lines of his face which, when I last saw him, were scarcely traceable, were now converted into deeply-chiselled wrinkles ; the form, too, of his face was altered — every feature being sharpened ; the expression of his eyes was most painful, conveying the idea of a melancholy too deeply seated ever to be removed.

“ He did not appear to know me ; indeed, he merely raised his eyes, as I closed the door, and then dropped them again upon a book, which he seemed to be perusing attentively, but which I found was turned upside down.

“ ‘ Father,’ said I, as soon as my tears would allow me to articulate, ‘ father, do you not

know me? will you not welcome me home?' He gazed on me for a few seconds, sprung from his chair, and, seizing both my hands, held me at a distance from him.

" 'Father,' said I again in agony, 'do you not know me? me, your son? your only son?'

"He seemed to recognize my voice for a moment, and his eyes gleamed with pleasure, but only for a moment, for, loosing my hands, he fell back in his chair, and said, in a voice so feeble as to be scarcely audible, 'No, it's not Owen, not Owen, where can Owen be?'

" 'Owen, sir,' I replied, annoyed beyond measure at finding that the man whom I detested occupied the place in his feeble mind that I ought to have filled,—'Owen, sir, is with my sister Alethæa.'

" 'Alethæa? ay, ay, yes—I know—they'll be married—but not yet—not yet.'

" 'I, sir, am just returned from Oxford,' I remarked, wishing to lead him into a train of thought which might enable him to recognize me.

" 'Oxford? ay, Oxford—my poor boy is at

Oxford — I've been ill — very ill — but he has never been to see me — but Owen has — where *can* Owen be ?

“ That villain—said I to myself, but speaking aloud — seems to engross all his thoughts, and I to have no share in—

“ ‘ *Share — share,*’ he cried, springing from his seat, his eyes assuming an appearance of intense interest ; ‘ share—in what concern ? Who are the directors ? How much per cent will it pay ? What’s the deposit money ? I’m quite ready to embark in any safe speculation, sir ; but I have a scheme of my own, sir, a scheme that *must* pay ; but before I enter into particulars—what house do you represent, sir ? I must not have men of straw, sir — but men of capital — you’re a man of capital, I’ve no doubt — I’ll disclose my plan to you, sir, but in confidence — if it gets abroad, sir, we shall be forestalled.’ ”

“ He seized me by the collar, led me up to a window, and, pulling out a pocket-book, held the pencil in his hand, as if preparing to write. He then looked round suspiciously, as if to see that no one was near to overhear him, and whispered.

“ ‘ I mean to form a joint stock-company, sir, I call it the Incorporated Society for the importation of Savoyard boys, hand-organs, white mice, monkeys, and marmots. It *must* pay, sir—a little boy told me he paid 5s. per diem for the hire of white mice—all the Jews deal in them, and make large fortunes. Here, sir, is the list of directors,’ pointing to a list of the lords and commons, in his book, ‘ all men of capital, sir—capital men ; 50,000 shares, at 5s. each. How many shall I say for you ?’

“ I was too much shocked to speak. Seeing me hesitate, he became very violent, and stamped so loudly on the floor with his feet, as he exclaimed, in tones getting gradually higher, ‘ It *must* pay, sir, it *must* pay,’ that the attendant, under whose surveillance he was placed, came in from the adjoining room, and requested me to withdraw immediately.

“ It seemed that he was perfectly quiet and tractable, as long as no allusion to business was made ; but the moment the least hint was given about money matters, or speculations of any kind, he became very violent. The fit, how-

ever, seldom lasted long, and was succeeded by increased melancholy and despondency.

“ By the physician’s advice, I visited him daily, but without attempting to converse with him, unless he addressed me. He recognized me after a few days, and to my great joy, the ‘ Owen — where is Owen — where *can* Owen be?’ was exchanged for ‘ My poor boy—where is my dear boy?’ He would sometimes lay his head on my shoulder, and sob like an infant, stroking my hair as he used to do in my childhood.

“ I remained at home for six months, during which period Owen was so attentive to the business of the bank, and showed so much talent and zeal, that Fidel ceased to regret that I had not listened to the suggestions of my father’s agents and become a partner in the concern. He visited us daily, or rather my mother and sister, for I generally absented myself during his stay—we could not meet without shewing our mutual feelings of hatred and abhorrence, and, as I saw it pained my sister, I thought it best to meet him as seldom as possible.

At the end of six months, my family yielded

to his earnest entreaties that his period of probation should be shortened, and my sister consented to become his wife at once. An arrangement was made by which he was appointed junior partner, with one-third of the profits, and had powers of attorney, I believe they call them, to act in my father's name. I did not choose to be present at the wedding, and act the hypocrite by feigning a joy I did not feel at my sister's union. I learned from the physician that my father was likely to remain in the same unhappy state for some time, and, though I left with reluctance, I set out upon a tour through Scotland.

“At my mother's suggestion, my annual allowance was doubled, and I sent up to Oxford to resign my scholarship, as I was preventing some boy, who might really want it, from obtaining £50 per annum, to assist him in going through the university.

“I have had cause to regret this step ever since; but at that time I felt fully justified in taking it.

“I will not detail to you my adventures in Scotland—they consisted chiefly in fishing, shoot-

ing, and loch-ing, or lake-ing. The hospitality of the Highlands was proverbial in those days, before steam conveyed such myriads of people to prey like locusts on the land of cakes. I was entertained at one mansion until I was tired of it, and then transferred to another, with a direction like a coach parcel, 'to be taken great care of.'

"I received several letters from my sister, who expressed herself quite satisfied with the object of her choice, and intimated a hope that her husband's attention to the interests of the family, the respect he showed to my father and mother, and the love he entertained for herself, would induce me to look upon him with more friendly eyes than I had hitherto done.

"I had been in Scotland nearly six months, and intended visiting the Hebrides, but gave up all idea of it on receiving a letter from Fidel, that caused me great uneasiness. He told me, under the strictest charge of secrecy, that he was not satisfied with Mr. Kington's proceedings, as many deeds and papers had been taken from the safe, which were deposited there as

securities. He wished me to return, as he had no one to consult with on so important a matter. My father was more violent than ever upon the slightest allusion to business.

“ I took my passage to London in a Leith smack, and, on the morning after my arrival in town, went into the city, intending to call at our agent’s. The principal partner, for whom I inquired, and to whom alone I was personally known, was out, and would not be at home until two o’clock. To beguile the time, I walked into one of the numerous eating-houses that surround Lombard Street, and, calling for a chop and the morning paper, sat down in one of the boxes. These boxes, as they are called, because, I suppose, they are used for *packing* people in as closely as possible, are separated from each other by wooden partitions, on the top of which are dingy red or green stuff curtains, hung on dingier brass rods, to prevent any but your own party seeing you eat and drink.

“ The waiter entered with a dirty napkin under one arm, and a dirty *Times* under the other ; two round plates, with two very dirty

round tin covers in his right hand, and a pewter cup with porter in it in his left.

“ ‘*Times*, sir ?’

“ ‘Yes.’

“ ‘Chop, sir ?’

“ ‘Yes.’

“ ‘One chop, sixpence ; one vegetable, penny ; one bread, penny ; half-pint stout, three halfpence—nine and a half, sir.’

“I paid him, and gave him the change out of the shilling for himself, for which unusual bit of generosity, being three halfpence over his usual fee, I received a very humble salaam, with an assurance that I should ‘have the *Morning Chron.* as soon as gentleman in green specs had done with it.’

“While I was endeavouring to masticate the bit of sole-leather, that was miscalled a mutton-chop, and reading a paragraph or two between the heats, some persons entered the box immediately behind mine, and, as I could find by the shaking of the partition, seated themselves on the bench next to me.

“The waiter approached them with his usual

‘Chop, sir? Steak, sir? Prime cut just now.’
A strange voice answered, ‘No, not at present; bring some paper, and pen and ink.’ — ‘Yessir.’

“An earnest conversation was commenced as soon as the writing materials were brought, of which nothing reached me but the whizzing and burring sounds that attend upon whispers. Not wishing to be an eavesdropper, I gave several loud imitations of a cough, and knocked my elbow against the wooden partition, to let them know that somebody was in the next box.

“I went on with my paper, and thought no more of my neighbours until I heard the words ‘It *must* be done, sir, and immediately. The stock *must* all be sold out, and the money for the mortgages advanced at once’—in a voice I could not mistake.

“‘Listen, listen to the voice of love,’ is an exhortation almost needless. I listened, and attentively, to the voice of *hatred*—for the speaker was Owen Kington.

“The strange voice inquired, ‘But will it not cause surprise, if not suspicion, that the estate of Longcrofts should be mortgaged? the

selling out of so much stock, too, at once, will excite public attention.'

" 'It *must* be done, sir, we have need of the money for a very advantageous investment,' replied Owen, 'and the stock is in different names. If you cannot, or will not do it, I must apply elsewhere.'

"The waiter was paid; and Owen and his friend left the room. Though I had no doubt whatever of his identity, from the peculiar tones of his voice, I watched him out of the box, in the little dingy looking-glass that was over the fireplace, and under the eight-day clock.

"At the appointed hour I returned to our agent's and found him within. I drew for a small sum, as an excuse for my visit; and, upon inquiring if Mr. Kington was likely to be in town, was told that a letter had been received from him that morning, stating that he should not be in London for some weeks."

When the Bursar arrived at this point of his tale, in a voice somewhat husky and dry, though he had oiled it at intervals with old port, a most

unharmonious and prolonged yaw-aw-awh ! from the vice-principal, accompanied by the stretching out of his legs to their full length under the mahagony, and his arms above it, to the endangerment of the senior tutor's nose, caused him to close the MS., and say :—

“ That's what I call a broad hint, Peter ! ”

“ Yaw-aw-awh. Yes, sir, ” cried I, gaping too.

“ A glass of cold brandy-and-water ! — yaw-aw-awh ! and light my lamp. ”

“ Another for me, Peter, yaw-aw-awh ! ” said the tutor. “ Bursar, here's your very good health, and thanks for your—yaw-aw-aw-awh ! You must finish it another night. ” *Exeunt omnes.*

CHAPTER VII.

SAM SMYTH'S MS.—*continued.*

"DINE with me to-day quietly in my rooms," said the Bursar to our dean and the senior tutor, "and I will, if you feel interested in it, go on with the MS. of poor Sam."

"But why not dine in hall," inquired the dean, "and then read it in the common room over our wine?"

"Simply, because I know there will be two or three *skids* there."

"Skids!" exclaimed the tutor; "what sort of animals may they be?"

"You know what a skid really is, I suppose?"

The tutor, a very clever man, had never met with the word, and acknowledged his ignorance

—which college-tutors very seldom have any occasion to do.

“A skid is a sort of iron shoe attached to a chain, and placed under the hind-wheel of a carriage to retard its progress when going down hill.”

“Ay,” said the dean, in his solemn and sonorous tones, “this retardation of the rotundities of wheeled vehicles is technically designated by Black Will—*nigerrimus Gulielmus*, as the undergraduates call him—‘*dragging a hill*.’”

“Quite right,” said the Bursar; “that is a physical skid. A metaphysical skid is an animal very often met with in common rooms and country gentlemen’s houses, and not unfrequently in ‘another place;’ a man who acts as a drag on the wheels of society; a ‘patent retarder’ of conversation and rational enjoyment; a bottle-stopper, and joke-hater — who casts a gloom over a party, and checks every attempt to ‘drive dull care away;’ a fellow who smothers the least spark of wit; a *wet blanket* to quench the flames of mirth: in short, a man that makes you fancy that your wine is ‘corked,’ the

candles burn dimly, and the evening as endless as a journey in the old Bath invalid coach."

The dean and tutor acknowledged that they had often met men to whom, although they were very slow coaches, they had been ready to call out "Pull up, and take the skid off!"

"Peter! Dinner for three in my rooms. Spitchcocked eels, a saddle of mutton, and a dish of snipes."

"Pastry, sir?"

"No, Peter; brown sugar, bean-flour, and rancid lard, though profitable to the cook, are a *rudis indigestaque moles* to the Bursar. You may order a dish of maccaroni or a fondu."

Now our cook was celebrated for what he called *fundoh* cheese. In reply to my question what fundoh cheese meant, he told me:—

"Why, you see, Mr. Priggins, I takes and grates this here Parmesan into this here fundoh (pointing to a shallow copper stewpan), and then I fundohs it over a fire, and that makes fundoh cheese."

The world have a mistaken notion that Oxford is celebrated for its cookery. I wish they

would try what Dusterly calls "our ashed calve's ead," which strongly resembles a decayed sheep-skin boiled to rags in a gallon of liquid glue !

Upon this occasion, Coquus unfortunately failed ; the eel was overdone, the mutton underdone, the snipes were too high, and the fundoh, like a Hindoo widow, was "burnt to death." I say unfortunately, because gentlemen who are worked so hard as college-officers are deserve some comforts as a reward for their labours.

On that very morning the dean had read prayers — in Latin, too. The tutor had given two lectures, and pointed out the exact situation of an "Island in the *Ægean* ;" and the Bursar had given a receipt for £30 caution-money ; and it was very hard their dinner should have been spoilt, when such hard labour had given them an appetite.

"Peter," said our Bursar, "take away these execrable eatables, or rather uneatables, and tell the cook I'll sconce him as sure as he is alive ; then bring me a bottle of the oldest port out of the furthestmost bin in my private cellar."

"What, the proctor, sir?"

“Yes. You may as well bring up three — a little warmth will not hurt it.”

Now, this wine, which was of a celebrated vintage, and peculiar character—“primeer kol-litay,” as Dusterly called it—obtained its name from having been paid for out of the salary which our Bursar received when he was proctor—at least out of what remained of it, after purchasing a new gown with velvet sleeves, and paying for the supper which is annually given by that officer to the University-barbers — the Tonsors.

I brought up one bottle as carefully as I could, holding it horizontally, and taking pains to keep the chalked side uppermost—for which I got unexpectedly rebuked.

“Peter, you are getting old and stupid. How *can* you be such an idiot as to bring a bottle of port up in that way? causing the wine to wobble about like the liquid in a spirit-level, and washing off the crust. Mind, sir, in future, and when you have drawn the bottle from the bin, turn it up slowly, and keep it perpendicularly; it may appear to you to be contrary to the

general practice, but it's a plan of my own, sir, the result of deep and painful thought, and the experience of years has confirmed the correctness of it. Now, sir, decant it slowly, and without frothing it, and then give me the MS."

"Let me see," said he, when I had given him the papers, and he had done smacking his lips after the first glass, "where did I leave off?"

"I think," replied the tutor, "Sam had just ascertained that Owen Kington was in London selling stock and mortgaging estates, without the knowledge of the agent."

"Yes," said the dean, "I was rather sleepy at the time; but I do recollect something about Sam's having a cheap and dirty chop somewhere in the east."

The Bursar found the place, took one bumper to church and king, and thus continued Sam Smyth's adventures:

"You will readily conceive that Owen's proceedings gave rise to many painful suspicions, and caused me much uneasiness. I determined to go down to Staffordshire and see old Fidel as soon as possible. The Oldeton mail was 'booked

full,' but I got a place on a night-coach which passed within ten miles of the town.

“ I sent a porter for my luggage, and dined in the city at the inn whence the coach was to start. Every thing was clean and neat, and the wine appeared to be good, but I could not relish it; it seemed to taste flat, and to have lost its exhilarating qualities.

“ I drank more than my usual allowance, but I could not ‘ cheer the cockles of my heart,’ or remove the gloomy fancies with which I was haunted. I tried to while away the time by reading the evening papers, but found that when I had read the leading article through, I knew nothing of the subject matter of it, and had not benefited by the malignant abuse it had lavished on some cotemporary journal which presumed to differ from it on some political point. I thought that eight o’clock never would arrive; it did at last, however, and with it the Boots to say that the coach was ready.

“ I had secured the box-seat in order to have a chat with the coachman, and avoid the conversation of the Brummagem tradesmen, that would

most likely be on the roof. We had a very heavy load on the top, and the hind and fore boots were crammed with baskets of fish. The coachman I fancied was drunk when we started, and my suspicions were confirmed before we got to the 'Peacock' at Islington, where he pulled up and had a tumbler of hot rum-and-water. At the 'Mother Redcap,' at the foot of Highgate Hill, he had another, and at the gate-house, where he stopped to breathe his horses, after climbing the hill, a third. I told him I was afraid he would overdo it, and run us into danger; to which he replied, by telling me to 'go to —— and mind my own business.' In going down the hill towards Finchley, he did not lock the wheel; the consequence was that the wheel-horses could not hold back against the heavy weight, and, after floundering a few yards on their haunches, fell, and the coach was upset.

“ When I recovered from a state of insensibility, which had lasted three or four hours, I found myself lying on a bed, in a small room, with four or five persons around me. One of them was binding up my arm, from which the

surgeon had taken a pound or two of blood, as I judged from the contents of a basin, which stood on the bed. He was employed in tying one of my legs firmly between two deal boards with long strips of calico. I was told that I—or rather the coachman—had broken it below the knee, and that it was a ‘compound fracture,’ and would probably confine me to my bed for some weeks. This was certainly very pleasant intelligence to a man who had every reason to suspect that the interests of himself and family required his immediate presence two hundred miles off.

“ I begged of the surgeon to write a letter for me to my mother, and tell her of my painful situation, and to old Fidel to urge him to come to me as soon as he possibly could.

“ Whether it was the severity of the accident, and the shock which the system had received, or anxiety of mind, I cannot say—most likely the latter—but I was so ill for a week, that I knew nothing that passed. When I recovered, my first inquiry was if Mr. Fidel had arrived, or any letters had been received. There were two,

one from my mother, expressing her regret that she could not come up and nurse me, as my father was too ill to be left, and had taken a fancy to keep her by his side day and night.

“ My sister Alethæa was in an ‘ interesting situation,’ and unable to travel so far. She begged of me to have the best advice, and to return home as soon as the surgeon would allow me to move. She made no allusion to Owen Kington’s coming up to me, as she rightly thought that if any thing would throw me into a fever, it would be his hated presence. Mr. Fidel’s letter was like himself, very neat and clean, and very short. He expressed his regret at not being able to wait upon me in consequence of the absence of Mr. Kington, who was gone to Edinburgh on business.

“ Now I was most anxious to write to Fidel to tell him of my having seen Owen in London, and of my suspicions of his having formed some underhanded plan of enriching himself at the expense of my father, but the surgeon would not allow me to do so. Indeed, if he had permitted me, I do not think I could have managed

it ; for I was so weak, that when I attempted to sit up in bed I was seized with a sensation of giddiness, that made me fancy all the chairs and tables were dancing about the room, and the posts of my bed running round after each other. I got my surgeon to write to Oxford, and order James Jobs to come up to me if he was out of place. Luckily for me he was so, and was at my bedside the following evening, looking very lean and hungry. The poor fellow had been earning a few shillings a-week, by cleaning the men's boots, and keeping dogs for them ; but the trade was so bad that the dogs were fed much better than himself.

“ At the end of a month, I was allowed to leave my bed for a sofa, and was assured by my surgeon that in a fortnight's time I should be able to travel home by easy stages. I did not write to Fidel, as I had had several letters from my mother, in which no allusion was made to any thing going wrong at the bank. I sent Jobs to the agents to get a check cashed, and to inquire if they had heard of or seen Mr. Kington lately. He returned with the money

and a message, that except on business transactions they had not heard of or seen any one from Oldeton since I had called on them.

“ The last day of the tedious fortnight at length arrived. I invited my surgeon to dine with me, and after making him a very polite speech for his kindness and attention to me, gave him a check for fifty guineas. After paying my bill for board and lodging, to the obliging hostess of ‘ The Wrestlers,’ and rewarding her servants, I found it necessary to draw some more money for my travelling expenses. I wrote a check, and on the following morning despatched Jobs to the agent’s with it. He returned, as pale as death, with the agreeable news that there were ‘ no effects,’ and a message from the senior partner, that he would see me in the course of the day. I sent for my surgeon and told him his check was valueless, and that I feared it would be out of my power to recompense him for his services at present. He was a gentleman, fortunately, and not only expressed himself perfectly willing to wait until it was quite convenient for me to discharge his

bill, but offered to supply me with money sufficient to carry me home. This kind offer I declined until I had had an interview with the agent.

“ I passed the day, as you may imagine, in a state of great anxiety, which was not alleviated by the sorrowful face of James Jobs, who seemed so completely weighed down by his fears that I was utterly ruined, as to be unable to do any thing but sigh and cry alternately.

“ About six o'clock in the evening our agent arrived, and with him old Fidel, who for a time acted like a maniac. He shook me by the hand, laughed heartily, and then burst out crying. Then he laughed and cried at the same time, like a lady in hysterics. He sat down for two minutes, then jumped off his chair, and danced about the room, upsetting several articles of furniture. I made signs to James Jobs to lead him out of the room ; but he resisted, saying, ‘ Leave me alone — leave me alone, I shall be well soon.’

“ When he had recovered, he told me, in a strange, rambling, incoherent manner, a tale

that I will endeavour to recount as concisely as I can :

“ Owen Kington, during an absence of nearly a month, in which Fidel had received three or four letters from him, dated, and bearing the postmark, Edinburgh, had managed, by means of the powers of attorney with which he had been furnished, to sell out all the stock, turn the securities of the firm into cash, and mortgage all the estates for nearly their full value. The discovery had taken place in consequence of the agents’ account having been overdrawn, and their writing to Fidel for an explanation and remittances. The safe, which was in an arched cellar under the bank, was locked, and the keys could not be found. On forcing the fastenings. it was nearly empty—nothing of any value remained ; the securities, title-deeds, bonds, with every thing convertible into money, were gone—in short, our ruin was complete.

“ The agent advised me to return home, as my father was worse, and my mother forced to leave him to attend my poor sister, who had been confined prematurely, in consequence of

the news of her husband's villany having been thoughtlessly and suddenly conveyed to her. He offered me a loan of £100, but Fidel declared that he had saved himself a little fortune, by care and economy, out of his salary, and should be offended if I applied for, or accepted assistance from, any one but himself. I thanked the agent heartily for his kind consideration, and gratified old Fidel by expressing a determination of throwing myself entirely, for the present, on his guidance and generosity.

“ On the following morning, with Fidel's aid, I paid my surgeon's bill, and set off in a carriage, which we hired, for what, alas ! was no longer our home. We travelled by easy stages, and arrived at Longcrofts on the fourth day. I found my sister and the child both dead, and my father in a state of mental torpor, and wasted to a skeleton. My mother was deeply grieved at the loss of her only daughter ; for the loss of the money she cared but little—in-
deed, she seemed scarcely to think about it. Mrs. Kington, the mother of the villain, that had brought all this misery on our heads, offered

to share her annuity with us, and would willingly have done so, had she not found in a few days that her son had contrived to leave her penniless, by selling the annuity under pretence of obtaining a more advantageous investment of the principal.

“ I will not dwell on this painful part of my tale. My father died in a few days ; every thing was sold and divided among the creditors. My mother went to live with her brother, who went to Oxford and called my creditors together. He stated to them the unfortunate situation in which I was placed by circumstances over which I had had no control, and they kindly consented to accept a portion of their dues, and to release me from all further anxiety on their account. .

“ The sum required my uncle paid at once, though he could ill afford to do it, having but a small income, and a large *little* family.

“ It is the fashion, you know, Bursar, to abuse the Oxford tradesmen — I mean those whose dealings are principally with the university, and to accuse them of making high charges and enormous profits ; but I can safely say, from

an examination of my bills, that, considering they had been running on for nearly five years, my creditors must have been *minus* if they had received the whole amount. I can also say, that I never knew an instance of a respectable tradesman's acting harshly or oppressively to a young man, who was willing, but unable to pay his bills. There are some scamps among them, of course, who impose on the inexperience of undergraduates, and for their roguery the honest, upright tradesman suffers.

“ Old Fidel declined an offer of a clerkship, with a liberal salary, at the agent's in London, and retired upon his little property which he had placed in the funds. I consented to share his cottage and his means, until I could hit upon some way or other of providing for myself.

“ How this was to be managed was a problem difficult of solution. For what was I suited? It was true that I was what may be termed a fair classical scholar. I could construe and parse most of the authors that are usually read at schools and college. I knew a smattering of Roman and Grecian history, and could find most

of the places of ancient renown on the map. I could write a decent copy of verses, and compose a tolerable theme in Latin or English, and had a slight acquaintance with Euclid and Logic ; of French I knew as little as four years' teaching at a grammar-school generally ensures ; but what did I know of law, physic, divinity, or any of the numerous branches of commerce ? of any thing, in fact, which was commutable into bread, cheese, and beer, or their representative, money ? I doubt very much if I could have done a rule-of-three sum, or reckoned the interest of any sum of money that had been left me as a legacy.

“ Fidel urged me strongly to allow him to initiate me into the mysteries of book-keeping and accounts, in order to qualify me for the situation which he had rejected ; but I had neither capabilities, taste, nor inclination for trade or business of any kind. A banker's clerk — indeed any other clerk — gave me a vague notion of a pale-faced, lank-haired, effeminate dyspeptic, who was only allowed to escape from work — and that not wholesome,

hard, bodily labour—to eat his food, for which he had no appetite, as fast as he could, in order to go to work again. I would ‘have none on’t.’

“As to the army and navy, I had no patronage, and the war was at an end. Besides, I had a cousin, a half-starved, half-pay (but the terms are synonymous) captain in a foot regiment, whose account of the miseries he endured, from the want of means to do as his wealthier brother-officers did, was quite enough to check any inclination I might have felt to parade myself in a dull country-town, and kick pebbles off a bridge for hours together for amusement, or be sent out to some healthy colony like Sierra Leone, to be manufactured into meat for jackals.

“There was but one profession left, for law and physic were out of the question; the former required five years’ servitude, and the latter seven; and at the end of that term, I might have had the satisfaction of engrossing deeds, as an attorney’s clerk, or pounding nastinesses as an apothecary’s assistant, at £40 per annum, and a glass of wine on Sundays. The bar and the gold-headed cane, without patronage, ensure a

rapid state of starvation. 'Motley's your only wear': the black gown and white tie, and that 'wide field for exertion,' a narrow pulpit, in a country-church, were my only resources.

"I knew that by hard reading I could prepare myself for orders in ten or twelve months, but I did not like the idea of imposing upon Fidel the task of keeping me during that period.

"It struck me 'one fine day,' that I might earn something by my pen. In great trepidation, and a feeling of nervousness, I sat down, and, with greater difficulty than I imagined was possible, wrote, in my best style, what I conceived was a very original and amusing historiette, and exactly suited to the readers of the —*Magazine*. I read it, with proper emphasis on the proper 'points,' to my old friend and protector, who was delighted with it, and fancied I was provided for for life.

"I was not 'taken in,' though I was done for; a 'Notice to Correspondents' told me plainly, but not politely, that I was 'an impostor, as the tale had appeared in three different magazines before, and been told with spirit and

elegance — qualities in which my version of it were totally and unequivocally deficient.’ I got something by it, however ; the ‘raw material’ was left for me at ‘the office,’ and waste paper is always useful, particularly to a man who smokes.

“All our inquiries as to the *locus in quo* of Owen Kington had hitherto proved fruitless. About a week after my failure in authorism, I received a letter from the agent, begging me to come up to London as soon as I could. As my leg, though still serving as a barometer, and giving me painful hints of every change of weather, was nearly well, I went up by the mail, and next morning was ushered into ‘the parlour,’ a small, dingy, dirty room, in which were a great many large boxes and iron-chests, and a table covered with ledgers, journals, cash-books, files, and other tools used in the trade of banking.

“Mr. Cashuppe, the senior partner, begged me to be seated on the only chair, besides his own leathern easy, that was in the room, and asked me if I thought I should know the man again whom I had seen in conversation with

Owen at the chop-house in the city. As I had merely seen him in the looking-glass for a minute or two before they left the coffee-room, I had my doubts whether I should be able to recognise him, but I thought I should know his voice.

“ Mr. Cashuppe gave me the *Times*, and told me to amuse myself with it until I should receive a signal from him—a rap at the door—to come to him in the front room.

“ In less than half an hour the summons was given, and I saw a man talking to one of the clerks, in whom I fancied I recognized Owen’s friend. I walked up to his side, and his voice, which was a peculiar one, for he stammered slightly, almost convinced me that he was the man. My suspicions were fully confirmed when he used both his hands to replace his hat on his head, which he had laid on the counter during his colloquy with the clerk. I nodded to the agent, who left his desk, and requested Mr. Discount, as he called him, to walk into the parlour. I followed; and, at a hint from Mr. Cashuppe, placed myself near the door to cut off any attempt at an escape.

“ ‘You are acquainted with a man named Owen Kington, I believe, sir ?’ said the agent, in an interrogatory tone.

“ Mr. Discount, who was what is termed on ‘change a *shy cock*, turned first very pale, and then very red, and took time to answer ‘that he had some knowledge of such a person.’

“ ‘You are aware, sir, that he has absconded with the whole of the property and moneys of the firm of Smyth and Co., bankers, Oldeton, Staffordshire, in which he was the junior partner ?’

“ No answer.

“ ‘You may recollect having been with him on a certain day, about three months since, in the coffee-room of Greasy’s chop-house ?’

“ Still *vox faucibus hæsit*.

“ ‘If not, this gentleman, Mr. Smyth,’ indicating that he meant me by pointing with his thumb ‘over the left’ shoulder, ‘may be able to freshen your memory ; for he saw you there, and overheard your conversation with Mr. Owen Kington.’

“ Mr. Discount, who had been standing

hitherto, sat down, and looked very earnestly at the hearthrug, on which he described a great many intricate geometrical designs with the point of his umbrella, but made no remark.

“ Mr. Cashuppe opened the parlour-door, and whispered something to one of the clerks, in which the words ‘ officer,’ ‘ immediately,’ were spoken loud enough to reach the ear of the gentleman with a short memory. He sprung from his chair, and endeavoured to push by me and escape, for which piece of rudeness I was compelled to knock him down. He rose, shook his fist in my face, and the dust off his clothes, and resumed his chair, as Mr. Cashuppe locked the door and put the key into his pocket.

“ After a silence of five minutes, he begged and entreated Mr. Cashuppe not to give him into custody, and he would disclose all the transactions that he had had with Owen. The officer, who had just arrived, was ordered to wait in the outer room, and Mr. Discount confessed that, through the instrumentality of himself and the children of Israel, Mr. Kington had ‘ realized,’ at a great sacrifice, upon all the securities, bonds,

and mortgages of my poor father, and gone to France, whence he had received a letter from him about a week before, dated Havre-de-Grace. He allowed that he had been very well paid for his share in the transaction, and offered, if he should be indemnified from further trouble and expense, to accompany me or any one else to Havre, in search of his former employer ; from whom, he doubtless knew, he should get nothing more to compensate him for the public exposure, if not more serious consequences of his villany.

“When the preliminaries were satisfactorily arranged, I received £50 from Cashuppe, and posted with Mr. Discount to Southampton. We sailed by the first packet for Havre, where we arrived on the second day. The only benefit that I derived from the voyage was the ridding my stomach of a great deal of bile ; for, on inquiring of Madame Strang, at the *Hôtel de Londres*, on the quay, we learned that the gentleman in a military surtout and a foraging cap, with large moustaches and bushy whiskers, who had stayed at her house for a week under the assumed name of Colonel Owen, had sailed for

New York two days before, in ‘the fast-sailing line-of-packets ship, General Washington, 800 tons burden, teak-built and copper-fastened;’ a circumstance of which Mr. Discount was possibly aware, though he declared *upon his honour* he was not.

“After obtaining our *Vu pour l’Angleterre* by the agency of Madame Moussut, the feminine *Commissaire d’Hôtel*, we re-embarked on board the Southampton packet. The wind was blowing hard from the N. W., and we were very nearly wrecked on the back of the Isle of Wight. I was almost uncharitable enough to wish that the vessel which contained Owen and his ill-gotten wealth might founder in the gale. I thank God that I did not whisper the thought even to my own heart, for in less than a week the newspapers were filled with accounts of injuries done by the storm, and amongst them, ‘the total wreck of the Washington, for New York, off the Scilly Isles, not a soul saved.’

“This news, which I conveyed as delicately as I could to Mrs. Kington, on my return to Olde-ton, threw her into a serious illness, which, after a few weeks, proved fatal to her.”

“ I commenced reading so hard, that old Fidel had serious thoughts of throwing ‘Tomline on the Thirty-nine Articles,’ and ‘Pearson on the Creed,’ behind the fire, for fear I should injure my health by over-application. I, however, was too anxious to relieve him from the expense of maintaining me not to persevere, and declined all invitations to enter into society, though kindly pressed to do so by my former friends, to whom the *diffugiunt cadis cum face siccatis amici* was not applicable.

“ One day, as I was deeply engaged in a long dissertation upon the propriety of omitting or inserting a Greek article in a passage where its presence or absence did not interfere with the meaning of the text, James Jobs entered. He was now head-waiter at ‘The Lion,’ a place I had obtained for him, to ensure his being near to me, and rendering me at his leisure those little services with which I found it difficult to dispense. He brought a county newspaper in his hand, and pointed to an advertisement which he said he thought might be worth my attention. It ran thus :

“ ‘WANTED.—An A.B. of Oxford or Cambridge, the former would be preferred, to take the classical chair in a seminary for young noblemen and gentlemen. Salary liberal. Accommodations comfortable. Apply to Dr. Doonuffin, Acorn House, near Lowborough.’

“As Lowborough was only twenty miles from Oldeton, I determined to go over and offer my services to ‘take the chair,’ though I had sundry misgivings as to my ability to fill it with propriety. I did not like the idea of being a *cane*, as ushers are called, in a ‘boarding-school for young gentlemen,’ and of sleeping in a double-barrelled bed, with a measly, rashy, hooping-coughy, croopy, ‘little dear;’ but poverty must put up with strange bedfellows, and my present dependant state was unpleasant.

“I went over, on the coach, to Lowborough, and, on inquiring for Acorn House, was directed to a fine old mansion, about a mile from the town, which derived its name from an enormous representation of ‘a specimen of the food of the aboriginal Britons,’ which was fixed upon a pointed sort of buttress on the top of the parapet.

“I afterwards learned that the mansion, and the estate on which it stood, formerly belonged to an old family which, as old things are wont to be, was now nearly worn out. The last occupier had been ruined in contesting the county to oblige his party, and was living abroad to oblige his eldest son, for whom the estate was being ‘nursed.’

“The house had been advertised again and again, but, as the land was let away from it to several farmers, no gentleman would take it, and as Dr. Doonuffin offered to keep it in repair until the heir came of age, and to pay the taxes, he was permitted to live in it rent-free. The furniture and pictures, with the exception of the family likenesses, which still graced the gallery, had been disposed of by public auction.

“The park in which the house stood had been well wooded and stocked with deer, but the trees had vanished, as the landlord had been forced to ‘cut his sticks’ to pay his electioneering bills; and in the room of the bucks and does, whose carcasses had been sold to fill the ‘fair round bellies’ of aldermen, and the skins to be

made up into Woodstock gloves, several flocks of muttons were seen nibbling the very heart out of the short sweet grass.

“Dr. Doonuffin, whose history I afterwards learnt from his own lips, had been a linendraper in London, but, being more strongly attached to his whist-club and his women than his business and his wife, had been twice a bankrupt. The first time he paid ninepence in the pound, and started again with ‘great credit’ to himself, and actually kept on for four months; but, as he could not meet the bills which then became due, he was again in the *Gazette*, and paid three farthings in the pound. He would, as he said, have ‘tried it on’ a third time, but no one would give him credit for a skein of silk. His gay friends at the club — which was called ‘The Bucks,’ — would not patronize a man who had no money to lose, and he would have been starved, had not the person who took to his business given him a place as shopman. Unfortunately there was a till in the shop-counter, out of which several silver coins had been missed, and as he was supposed to know the method of unlocking

the till better than any one else in the place, he was recommended to look out for another situation. He did 'keep a good look out,' and got a board, announcing cheap clothes, which he carried about on a long pole, at one shilling a day. If this did not give him much food, it gave him plenty of time for observation; and, in one of his walks across Tower Hill, he saw a crowd collected round a man, who was highly delighting them, particularly the women, by assuring them, in very powerful language, that they were all sure to go to—Hades, or Tartarus rather. But the most interesting part of the business to Mr. Doonuffin was, that at the conclusion of this comforting discourse a collection was made for the preacher, amounting, in coppers, to fifteen-pence-halfpenny, with which he retired to the nearest gin-shop.

“ Mr. Doonuffin resigned his board in favour of a friend that very evening, and, early next morning, went to Whitechapel, where he was unknown, and commenced preaching. He was too mild by far, and made but three pennyworth of impression on his hearers. In his next at-

tempt, near Shoreditch Church, he d—d them to the amount of fivepence, and, being taken up by a constable for preaching without a licence, which he and his hearers called ‘being persecuted for righteousness’ sake,’ his fortune was made. He obtained a chapel, and, by paying court to the old women in the court where his chapel was situated, he did remarkably well, and, if he had not been married, might have formed a wealthy connexion.

“He formed, however, a connexion of another sort, and was forced to exchange duties with a brother ranter, who had come up from Staffordshire to a grand ‘revival.’ He soon became a ‘star’ among the Potteries ; and, as he wrote an excellent hand, and was a good accountant, he set up school, and assumed the degree of Doctor, without paying any fees for it.

“When Acorn House was vacant, the lawyer, who had made his own fortune by ruining his patron, and was one of the doctor’s most attentive hearers, advised him to take the house, and advertise in every paper, every day for a month, for boarders at twenty-two guineas a year, in-

cluding every thing. The plan succeeded, and his house was so full that he was unable to teach the boys Latin and Greek (of which he knew not a word) himself, so he resolved to engage what he called a 'regular tip-top out-and-outer from the university.'

"When I was introduced to the doctor, he was sitting in his library — in a large purple-leather reading-chair. Before him was a table with an enormous bible, open, and various tracts scattered about upon it. In appearance he was a well-fed man, with a roguish-looking eye, which he endeavoured to hide by combing his hair smooth over his forehead. He wore a neat but pharisaically-cut suit of black, and a small white plaited stock round his neck.

"I don't know what his ideas of an A. B. might have been, but he seemed rather surprised when I announced the object of my call. I had on a green cutaway coat, buff waistcoat, and white duck trousers, and certainly looked more like a sporting character than an usher.

"He asked me a very few questions about my attainments, and, when I told him I had read

Thucydides, Livy, and the usual routine of classics, seemed amazed at my erudition. He begged to see my diploma.

“ ‘My diploma, sir?’ said I, ‘I really don’t know what you mean.’

“ ‘Why,’ he replied, ‘I suppose you paid pretty handsomely for your degree, and of course you took a receipt for the money — a certificate to prove that you are what you profess to be—a Bachelor of Arts.’

“I assured him, that, though a degree at Oxford was an expensive honour, they never gave us any thing to show for it.

“ ‘I’m sorry for that, sir, for I must have a *real* A. B., and I know for certain that some men assume a degree to which they have no right or title.’

“ ‘D. D.,’ thought I, but — merely said that I fortunately could prove my bachelorship by referring him to the Oxford calendar.

“This point being settled, he began to talk about terms, and seemed pleased when I told him that I merely wanted a home and provisions, until I could get into orders.

“He offered to give me thirty guineas a year, which I accepted upon one condition, that I should have a bedroom to myself, and nothing to do with the boys out of school-hours.

“When this was also settled, and he had given me a plain hint that I should alter my dress, he introduced me to the dining-room and his wife, a very *fine* woman, in every sense of the word, but evidently a Tartar. I dined with them, and returned to Oldeton, promising to be in my ‘classical chair’ on the 25th of July—the day on which the vacation ended.

“Old Fidel did not like the idea of my leaving him, and gave me to understand that I had fixed upon a profession I should soon be glad to relinquish. He entertained me with a great many anecdotes of a friend of his who had been an usher in a school, and was tortured to death by the boys. I had a notion that, as long as the muscles of my arm were sound, no such fate would befall me.

“On the eventful 25th I took up my abode at Acorn House; and, as the boys did not return all at the same time, but kept dropping in, one by

one, like singers in a country church, I had not much work to do for the first week. There were about ninety boys, and *such* boys I never saw before ! All had short-cropped hair, and corduroys, dirty faces, and brown holland pinbefores. To rule these brutes there were four ushers. I tried to form a class of the biggest boys, and drive the Latin grammar into them. It was of no use by fair means, so I determined to try what the stick would do. I told the biggest boy, who was a long loose-made lout, that if he did not learn his lesson perfectly the next morning, I should cane him well.

“ ‘ Wull ’e though ? I should rayther loike to cotch ’e at it ! ’ he replied, with a very knowing shake of the head, and a wink to the rest of the class, that made them all laugh.

“ I seized the doctor’s walking-stick, which happened to be lying near, and shook it very significantly. The lad, by no means daunted, drew a large bread-and-cheese-knife — a hack-knife as boys call it, and said :—

“ ‘ If you do touch me, I’ll stick this into thee ! ’

“ I struck him a sharp blow on the knuckles, and the knife fell from his hand. I then seized him by the collar, and gave him a sound thrashing, which winded me, crippled him, and destroyed the bamboo. One of his friends, who seemed inclined to defend him, I knocked down, and told the others I should serve them in the same way if they did not sit down quietly.

“ As I had settled the two biggest bullies in the school, I thought I had done enough for one day, and retired to my room. In the evening, after supper, Doctor Doonuffin begged I would walk into his library, as he wished to speak to me. I went accordingly. It struck me that the library was perfumed rather highly with the scent of rum, and that the doctor’s face was redder than usual, and his step not so steady and dignified.

“ He asked me if I ever smoked, to which I answered that I was fond of a good *cigar*. He confessed that he preferred a pipe of shag tobacco, and, opening a drawer, which was labelled ‘Anti-creature-comforts Society,’ took out a box of Havannahs, his pipe, and a jar of tobacco.

He rang the bell, and ordered a kettle of hot water, and, when it was brought, extracted from a niche in his bookcase, inscribed, 'Spiritual Consolation for melancholy Christians,' a large stone jar of best old Jamaica, and a ditto of gin.

"As soon as he had made two very stiff glasses, which he called 'whistlers,' and lit his pipe, he addressed me thus :—

"'Mr. Smyth, sir, I am very much pleased you have broken Bill Blinks's head ; for, to tell you the truth, I have often longed to do it myself, but was afraid of him. Without intending it, however, you have done me a great and irreparable injury. I profess to teach on the 'soothing system.' I advertise 'no corporeal punishments,' and that boy Bill, and his friend Bob Bunks, whom you with great science and propriety knocked down, have run away, and to-morrow, I dare say, half the school will follow their example ; they can't to-night, for I've locked them up, and taken all their shoes and corduroys away. Come, sir, *empty* your glass, and I'll brew again.'

“I did so, thinking that a few more glasses would enable me to gain an insight into his real character. I ventured to ask him to explain his ‘soothing system.’

“‘Why, you see, sir, mothers don’t like to have their children beaten black and blue, and boys will sometimes resist—as I know by experience ; for I assisted in a rebellion myself, in which my master was beaten to a jelly, and marked for life, by having his nose nearly knocked off with the edge of an unframed slate. I find it much more profitable and not half so dangerous to send them to bed without their meals—that’s my plan, sir.’

“‘But,’ said I, ‘I can see no economy in that, for I suppose they eat double at the next meal.’

“‘No such thing,’ he replied. ‘If it’s breakfast, I tell the cook to smoke their bread-and-milk, or stir it up with a rushlight ; if dinner, I cut them all fat, and underdone ; and if supper, I take care that they have a mouldy crust, and rindy cheese—that’s my plan, sir.’

“‘How you can teach boys without punishing

them with a stick or rod, I can't imagine,' said I.

" 'Teach ! You don't suppose I teach ? I keep three assistants besides yourself, sir, and no man who keeps a dog, thinks it necessary to bark himself. They teach—at least pretend to do so, which does quite as well. I attend to their 'moral and religious sentiments,' prayers and morning hymn before breakfast, prayers and evening ditto before supper, and bible twice on Sundays ; besides joining my own flock at chapel—that's my plan, sir. Come, *empt* your glass.'

" 'I am afraid,' I observed, 'I shall not be able to do the boys justice, for they don't seem disposed to learn unless they are made to do it.'

" 'Never you mind about that, sir — if they won't learn, it ain't your fault — you'll find it more agreeable to tell them their lessons, if they can't say them, than trying to make them do it ; take it easy — that's my plan, sir. Give them plenty of books, best editions, well bound — it answers — twenty per cent. is a fair profit. I mean all the boys to learn Latin — charge four

guineas extra for it—that's my plan, sir. Take another cigar.'

" ' You keep your boys remarkably well, sir,' I remarked, ' and I can't think how you manage to do it for £22 per annum.'

" ' Why, as to the £22 per annum, that I'll explain presently ; as to the provisions, you see, I manage in this way. If Mr. Lyver the butcher does not send me pupils enough to cover his bill, I threaten to deal with his rival, Mr. Hart, and I always deal only with those tradesmen that send me their sons — if they stick it on, so do I — pens, paper, slates, combs, brushes, knives, and Mrs. Doonuffin's domestic medicines — Epsom salts and Ippecakkyanny—mount up, I can tell you — that's my plan, sir — that's how I manage the vittleing department.'

" ' And as to the £22 per annum ?' I inquired.

" ' Why, you see, sir,' he continued, pulling out one of his cards of terms, on which was a neat engraving of Acorn House, which looked very imposing on paper. ' You see, sir, I circulate these in London, chiefly, where I have a

large connexion in the dissenting interest; read, and you'll perceive that I say 'Noblemen and gentlemen's sons are splendidly boarded at the low charge of twenty-two guineas per annum, every thing included.' Now I had counsel's opinion on that card, and he tells me it can only mean that they are to be fed and lodged for that sum, it says nothing about being *taught*, so I charge extra for that—that's my plan, sir. Four guineas a year—*guineas*, you'll observe, get five per cent. by that—for writing, four for ciphering, four for book-keeping, four for Latin, four for Greek, four for geography and globes, and four more for English literature, including poetry and Bell's letters. Add books, washing, and other little *ancetteros*, and you'll find it is not done for £22 per annum. Come, sir, *empt* your glass.'

"To my inquiry 'if he got paid,' he answered—

" 'Why, you see, sir, my friend Grigs, the lawyer, the senior deacon of my chapel, who put me in here rent-free, receives two-and-a-half per cent. on all my bills, and, if the parents don't

pay within a month after 'bill delivered,' he arrests them at once, and makes a pretty good thing of it—that's *his* plan, sir.'

"I allowed it was a very ingenious one, but not calculated to last long.

"'You're mistaken, sir; the boys are well fed, and their clothes well washed and mended; their books are handsomely bound, and their copy and summing books neatly written out *for* them, and that satisfies most mothers. As the women have nothing to do with finding the money, they are very easily pleased: besides, I'm sure of my boys for one year, as I never send in the bill for the first half until they return from the holidays, and have paid carriage down. They don't think it worth while to pay a quarter for nothing, and coach fares up and down in the bargain—that's my plan, sir. Take another cigar, and *empty* your glass.'

"'Your boys, I apprehend, do not turn out very good scholars, and your plan, I still think, will in time defeat itself.'

"'In time — very true; but you see, sir, before that time arrives I have made a few hun-

dreds—sham ill—advertise that the care of my health requires me to retire from public life—sell the furniture and goodwill for a round sum, and open again in another part of England—that's my plan, sir.'

"The rum-and-water was beginning to operate—the whole man was altered—he winked with his knowing-looking eyes—thrust his hair back from his forehead into a respectable Brutus topknot, and exchanged the whining-canting tones in which he had commenced his communications, for the bland, quick note in which he had been used to say to his lady-customers, 'Serve *you* in a minute, mum—can I do any thin more for *you*?' I therefore ventured to hint to him a wish to hear something of his early history. He readily complied with it, and gave me the account of which I have given a brief summary.

" 'And Mrs. Doonuffin,' said I, wishing to lead him on, 'was the daughter of—'

" 'Skaley, the carcass-butcher of West Smithfield. A very fine girl she was, sir; such a colour!—all the effect of the smell of raw beef.

Her father refused my offers of taking her carcass, and swore I should never have a joint of her body. I persevered — private meetings — awkward, but likely results—the commodity was damaged — not marketable — took her off his hands for £500, with which I set up for myself — you know with what success. Old Skaley could not start me again — he killed himself by eating six pounds of his own steaks, and drinking a quart of gin for a wager. Come, you don't *empt* your glass.

“‘I'm sorry to tell you, sir,’ he continued, resuming his story, and putting on a chapel-look, ‘that the only thing he left his daughter was an ungodly liking for steaks and gin. I have tried precept and example, but without effect, to cure her of so disgusting a practice — I mean in a lady. I once went to the expence of two rumps of prime beef, and had them cut up, and served hot and hot for four hours, and set a nine-gallon keg of gin by her bedside, with a tap in, and a tumbler by it. The only effect was, she declared, after the third plate, that she would not eat any more unless I would send out for a

barrel of oysters, and make them into sauce for her. I did so—she got drunk, sir—*very* drunk, and was ill ; but it did not kill her—cure her, I mean, and I had the satisfaction of paying a long bill for draughts and pills, in addition to the original outlay for provisions. I allow her a pint a day now, sir, and lock up the cellar—that’s my plan, sir ; but I suspect she has a plan of her own ; a pint could never affect her head, and make her snore as she does six nights out of the seven. Yet I must say, she’s a prudent woman—must give her credit for that—she never gets fuddled till the boys are gone to bed. Take another cigar, sir ; I am afraid you don’t like them.’

“ I told him I had, I thought, given him good proof to the contrary, as I had taken four, and was afraid to venture another.

“ ‘ Four ! what’s four cigars ? ’ said he, contemptuously thrusting another into my hand. ‘ Why, when I belonged to our club, *The Bucks*, we never parted under a dozen, and on grand nights, a dozen and a half, with liquid to match. Ah, those were the days ! sich prime

chaps! dabs at whist! Do you play whist, sir?— But I never play now—it wants four, and it's against the rules of the congregation—happy chaps the regular clergy—regular rubber every night if they like, while we poor voluntary labourers in the vineyard—d—n it—can't even lay a shilling on the odd trick. We might manage a game at cribbage—pretty game for two—learned it of my little Susan—nice girl—apt to peg rather too fast.'

“ ‘ Susan who ? ’ I inquired.

“ ‘ Don't recollect her other name—nice little girl—rather expensive—two pound a week, and lots of muslin—she never wore cotton. Free admission to Drury Lane, and all that—Mrs. Doonuffin very jealous of her; but we *can* manage a touch at cribbage, a shilling a game, and half a crown on the rub; got a board there in that drawer marked ‘ *Whole Duty of Man.* ’ No one will know it—my wife never intrudes here; I tell her that I can't be interrupted in composing my moving discourses, and she's better engaged—that's my plan, sir. *Empty* your glass.'

“There is no rule without an exception — it may have been said before ; and Mrs. Doonuffin, to prove it, made an exception to her rule of never interrupting the doctor’s compositions ; for just as he was compounding another ‘ whistler,’ XXX strong, a violent scuffle, and the sounds of voices in anger, were heard in the passage leading to the library, the door of which was dashed violently open, and the lady of the house rushed in, dragging by the hair of her head with one hand, and cuffing on the cheek with the other, a plain-looking, squinting woman, who held the situation of box-maid in the establishment.

“Mrs. Doonuffin was constitutionally liable to severe attacks of the ‘ green-eyed monster,’ and her husband’s ‘ gallivantings,’ as she called them, had increased the disorder to an alarming height. She never hired a girl who could boast of a pretty, or even a not-ugly face, but gave a pound a year more wages for a person pitted with the small-pox, two for a squinter, and would willingly have given an additional five for a broken nose and an eye knocked out ; a toothless wretch, with a Richard-the-third back, was invaluable.

“She hurled the box-maid into the room, and furthered her progress by an application of her foot, *au derrière*, and staggering up to the doctor, after locking the door, stood with one hand akimbo, and the other holding on by the table; and as soon as she had recovered her breath, which had been exhausted by her extraordinary exertions, she addressed him in a speech which certainly had the merit of rapidity and indistinctness of articulation, mingled with the tones and slang of a cockney hackney-coachman.

“‘So—so—so, you wile, vorthless willan, you hoverfed, double-faced, dissembling conventieler!! you otblooded, preaching, and praying woluntary!!! you sarm-singin, vench-enticin congregationer!!! You ain’t satisfied vith avin vun ’oman as dotes upon you dreadful, and as ought to be the comfort of your soul, and the hidul of your art! her as brought you a lovely babby a month arter she was married—a lovely babby, I say, though it was a dead un; but you must go for to try to sedooose a poor, hinnocent, nasty trolloping, unedicated creater like that.’

“The lady pointed *à la* Siddons indignantly at the box-maid, who was doing, what is called an impossibility, two things at once—crying bitterly, and arranging her ‘dishevelled locks.’

“The doctor, who had laid down his pipe, and popped his grog under his shovel hat, looked in the direction indicated by his wife’s hand, but merely replied,

“‘You’re drunk, Mrs. Doonuffin; you’ve been drinking, marm, and have allowed your sanguinary imagination to get the better of your ordinary sobriety of demeanour.’

“‘I get drunk, you solitary, selfish sot! You’re beastly drunk yourself, and fancies has hother people his the same. You—’

“Fearing that I might be *de trop* in this interesting marital and uxorious squabble, I ventured to ask to be allowed to retire; but the lady begged I would be seated, and listen to her tale of the wrongs inflicted on her by the ‘vorthy and respectable minister of the Woluntary Chapel.’

“‘This wery last hevening as ever was, hi was hobligated for to hask the assistance of that



young 'oman to elp me hup to bed, cos I was a sufferin from a giddiness in my ed—'

" 'Ginniness, you mean, marm,' said the doctor.

" 'Feller! who's a torkin to you? Vell, I feels verry faint jist as hi gits to her room, and hi sais, Betty, sais hi, we'll go hin and sit down a bit. She tries to purwent me; and the more she tries, the more I would not be purwented. Vell, I sits down on the bed, and on the piller I finds this verry suspicious and hundeniable harticle!'

" She extracted from her pocket a very large and comfortable anti-rheumatic double-cotton nightcap, that evidently formed no portion of a female's *toilette*, and threw it indignantly at her husband.

" 'There can't be no doubt, you perfidious hoathbreaking hindividual, as you was a going for to—'

" What disclosures might have ensued must remain a mystery, for Dr. Doonuffin jumped up, and gave his wife so hard a pat on the head with the folio bible, in reply to her challenge, indi-

cated by 'throwing down' the nightcap, that she fell to the floor perfectly insensible. The doctor raised her in his arms, and, with the assistance of the box-maid, who knocked her mistress's head against the doorpost—by chance, of course, as she passed the door—conveyed her to bed.

"When he returned, he relighted his pipe, and coolly observed, 'That's my plan, sir.'

"He fell into a deep reverie, and, I presume, from the exertion he had undergone, seemed to be much intoxicated, and troubled with the hiccups. I did not interrupt him, as I was engaged in meditating upon the pleasant life I should be likely to lead with this happy couple, and the nice young noblemen and gentlemen committed to their valuable superintendence.

"After nearly a quarter of an hour's silence he roused himself, and requested me to '*empt* my glass.'

"I declined, and begged to be allowed to retire.

"'*One* more—*one* more, my dear (hiccup) young friend—a parting cup; a bumper at parting, but that (hiccup) ain't in the hymn-book.'

“In spite of my resistance, he contrived to pour a quantity of gin into my glass, and a still larger on the carpet, and, having filled his own with pure rum, he sat down and began again.

“‘You’re a very nice young man — I know you are—I feel it here (hiccup)—I’ve formed a very violent affection for you ; I have indeed — David and Jonathan-like — Sampson and Delilahish — Ruth and Boaz a fool to it (hiccup) — I’m going to prove it — you’re a fool ! — you’re going into the church—you’re an ass ! (hiccup.) Take my advice and try the volunteers — volunteers, I mean. You don’t care about whist — what’s the use of being ordained ? pawed by a bishop ? (hiccup.) What’s a curacy ? Forty pounds, and keep yourself ! — Buy a bible — cheap enough at the pawnbroker’s — join the jumpers, shakers, or screamers, it’s no matter which — get a chapel, two hundred a year, and all your grub (hiccup). Single man — stick to the women—lots of white pocket-handkerchiefs—dine with one—sup with another—nice and hot — breakfast with a third — prime twankay — never mind the men, and your fortune’s made. Get married to—’

“Whom, he could not inform me; for in his zeal to gain me over to his notions—to ‘convert me to his faith,’ I ought to have said—he used much gesticulation, and, advancing too forward in his chair, he lost his equilibrium, and fell with his forehead on the edge of the fender.

“I left him, and sent his friend the box-maid to him, who, I imagined, would know how to take care of him and carry him to bed.

“On the following day he appeared at ‘prayers and morning hymn,’ with a large patch of sticking-plaster upon his forehead, and after breakfast he took me by the arm, and walked out into the park. He begged I would take no notice of the little touch of epilepsy he had had the night before, as it might alarm the female part of his congregation.

“I assured him I would not, and inquired after the health of his wife.

“‘Ah! that horrid vice! Mr. Smyth, she has a most distressing headache, and can’t get up—a soul-insnaring sin, sir—she can’t eat breakfast—I always lay in a good one—that’s my plan, sir.’

“Soon after I had taken my ‘classical chair,’ a very stout man, in very thick brown top-boots, and a very large ash-stick in his hand, came into the school-room, and, after surveying the three English ushers, walked up to me, and begged to know if my name was Smyth. On my answering in the affirmative, he asked me ‘if I was the man as thrashed his son yesterday.’

“‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘and I think he richly deserved it.’

“‘Oh!—thee dost thee, and wouldst thrash un again?’

“‘Decidedly, if he dared to draw a knife on me.’

“‘Wouldst thrash un well? Hit un hard loike?’

“‘Certainly, as hard and as long as I could.’

“‘Dang it, mon, gee’s thine hond! I loike thee the better vor it. But thee didn’t do un half justice. Coom along wi’ I, and I’ll shew thee how to whop un.’

“I followed him to the hall, where master Billy and his friend Bobby were standing and listening sulkily to a lecture on improprieties,

delivered by the doctor, upon 'his plan,' and in his best didactic style.

"Mr. Blinks caught hold of his son, and beat him so severely that I was forced to interfere.

" 'There, my lad, that's the way to whop un ! I'll gie thee my ashen stick, and a good dinner whenever you loike to coom over to farm.'

"Mrs. Doonuffin did not make her appearance at dinner, but sent for her friend, Mr. Grigs, the lawyer, and deacon of the chapel. Soon after he arrived, the doctor was summoned to his wife's bedroom, and a long discussion ensued 'with closed doors.'

"In about an hour's time I was summoned to the library, where I found Mr. Grigs *solus*. He put three five-pound notes into my hand, and told me that Doctor Doonuffin had altered his mind, and meant to undertake the classical department himself — he had paid me for the half-year, to which I was fully entitled, and had taken my place in the Oldeton coach, which would be at the lodge in a few minutes. I took the hint, the notes, and my departure.

“ Mr. Grigs walked with me, telling one of the servants to follow with my boxes. I turned round to ‘ take a last fond look’ at Acorn House, and saw the respectable owner at his bedroom window ; he made a sign, by putting his hand to his mouth, like a person in the act of drinking, and pointed behind him towards the bed, to intimate, I suppose, that his wife was the cause of my dismissal. Grigs shook hands with me, and hinted that the ‘ tongue was a dangerous weapon,’ and that the ‘ least said the sooner things were mended ’—a hint which I took—disclosing my adventures only to Fidel and James Jobs.”

“ Well,” said the Bursar, “ I think that must do for to-night. Peter !—brandy-and-water — and put me in mind of sconcing the cook to-morrow morning. Eels overdone, mutton underdone, snipes a mass of corruption, and fondu scorched to a cinder — it’s too bad — I’ll sconce him a guinea.”

“ Very right,” said the dean. “ We will dine in my rooms next week—finish Sam’s MS., and give Coquus another trial. If he don’t succeed

better than he has to-day—we'll expel him. It's abominable that we should be deprived of the few little enjoyments to which we are justly entitled under the founder's will."

Omnes.—" Very abominable indeed !"

END OF VOL. I.

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